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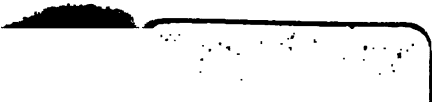
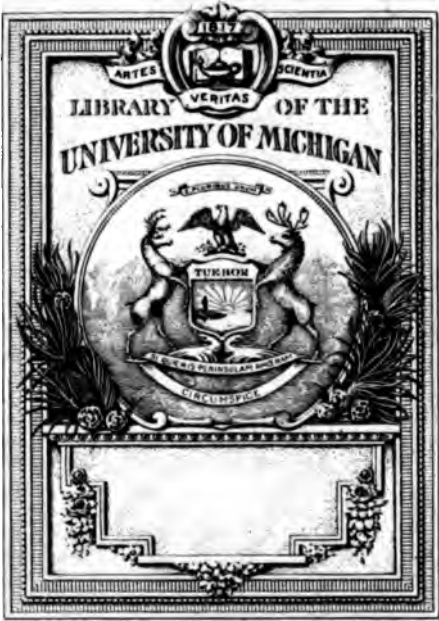
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OLD-TIME TRAVEL

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

LIFE OF GENERAL SIR E. HAMLEY.

LIFE OF GENERAL JOHN JACOB.

**HALF A CENTURY, OR CHANGE IN MEN AND
MANNERS.**

LETTERS FROM THE WEST HIGHLANDS.

LETTERS FROM WEST IRELAND.

(Reprinted from The Times.)

MOUNTAIN STREAM AND COVERT.







St. Sebastian
The Port looking seawards.

From the pier







OLD-TIME TRAVEL

**PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF THE
CONTINENT FORTY YEARS AGO COM-
PARED WITH EXPERIENCES OF THE
PRESENT DAY**

BY ALEXANDER INNES SHAND

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

BY A. H. HALLAM MURRAY

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1903



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PREFACE

MEMORY is responsible for these recollections, as I never kept a diary or made a note. It is my great good fortune that my friend Mr Hallam Murray had filled portfolios with his fascinating water-colour drawings in going over much the same ground, and I hope the public may be as grateful for the selections from them as is the Author of the "Travel Notes."

A.I.S., *November* 1903.





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CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. OLDER HOLLAND	1
II. TRAVEL IN THE LOW COUNTRIES	17
III. PASSPORTS—CUSTOMS—CURRENCY	39
IV. RHINELAND	54
V. THE BATHS	88
VI. THE TRAVELLER'S LIBRARY	123
VII. SWISS TOURING	138
VIII. CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES	174
IX. THE VETTURINO	206
X. THE CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY	231
XI. OLDER ROME	260
XII. OLDER NAPLES	296
XIII. SICILY	319
XIV. BRITTANY	335
XV. IMPERIAL PARIS	356
XVI. OLDER SPAIN	378



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ST SEBASTIAN. THE PORT LOOKING EASTWARDS	<i>Frontispiece</i>
UTRECHT. THE FISH MARKET	<i>To face page 2</i>
HAARLEM. THE AMSTERDAMSTER POORT	,, 16
„ THE CATHEDRAL	,, 18
ANTWERP. THE BOUCHERIE	,, 20
DORTRECHT CHURCH	,, 32
HAARLEM. A TYPICAL DUTCH WINDMILL	,, 54
GASTEIN. LOOKING DOWN THE VALLEY	,, 88
ST MORITZ IN WINTER. LOOKING UP THE VALLEY TOWARDS THE MALOJA PASS	,, 118
A SCHEVENINGEN FISHING-BOAT	,, 122
LUCERNE. THE COVERED MILL BRIDGE OVER THE REUSS	,, 138
BERNE. THE CLOCK GATEWAY	,, 142
LUCERNE. VIEW OF THE LAKE AND MOUNTAINS FROM THE SCHWEIZERHOF	,, 146
LAKE OF GENEVA FROM LAUSANNE	,, 154
SION. RHONE VALLEY	,, 156
THE MATTERHORN FROM THE RIFFEL	,, 160
LAUSANNE. THE CASTLE AND CATHEDRAL	,, 170
ROTHENBURG. THE RATHHAUS DOOR	,, 174
NUREMBERG. THE FRAUEN THOR	,, 178

xii LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

NUREMBERG. THE CASTLE AND NORTH WALL . . .	<i>To face page</i>	184
„ THE CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE . . .	„	200
ROTHENBURG. THE RATHHUS DOOR FROM SCHMIDT STRASSE	„	204
WÜRZBURG FROM THE BRIDGE	„	206
VIAREGGIO. LOOKING INTO THE GULF OF SPEZIA (and showing the spot where Shelley's body was washed ashore)	„	218
MENTONE. AN OLD STREET	„	220
HYÈRES. FROM "LES SALINS"	„	226
MILAN. PORTA DI GENOVA	„	236
FLORENCE. THE MERCATO VECCHIO. (<i>Now de- stroyed</i>)	„	240
„ THE PONTE VECCHIO	„	244
VENICE. A STREET SCENE	„	250
„ SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE AND THE DOGANA	„	252
ROME. THE APPROACH TO ROME FROM MONTE MARIO	„	261
„ THE LUDOVISI GARDENS. (<i>Now destroyed</i>)	„	272
„ THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA IN ARA CÆLI	„	286
FLORENCE. VIEW ACROSS THE PLAIN FROM BOBOLI GARDENS	„	294
„ FROM POGGIO GHERARDO	„	318
ROSCOFF. THE HARBOUR	„	354
PASAJES. (Showing the house occupied by Victor Hugo)	„	378
FUENTERRABIA FROM THE IRUN ROAD	„	382
TOLEDO. LA PUERTA SANGRE	„	390
CEBRALTAR. LOOKING WEST	„	400



OLD TIME TRAVEL

CHAPTER I

OLDER HOLLAND

LIKE London Stone, the centre of the Roman roads radiating through Britain or the Milliarium Aureum at the seat of the Empire, there is an ever memorable starting-point in old-time travel. It is the moment when you first set eyes on the Continent. With the faintest flicker of an imagination, you know something of the sensations of Columbus when he sighted his new world. The future is unknown, but you expect surprises, and are never disappointed. There is nothing of the sublime and little of the picturesque in the low-lying coasts of Holland, yet I doubt whether an Englishman can have a more impressive introduction to the Continent. You land in a country



turned topsy-turvy, where all preconceived ideas are upset. The winds are always fighting the waters, and the pumps must be kept going lest the "Netherlands" should be swamped. "Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink." Before landing, if addicted to the pure element, you were solemnly warned to stick to the stone bottles from the springs of Utrecht or the fountains of Seltzer. Now the water companies have been laying down net-works of pipes from the eastward, and there is no lurking disease in the carafe on the dinner-table. Some fifty years ago the coast lights were few and relatively primitive—in fogs about as dense as those of Newfoundland, it needed skilful navigation to grope your way to the port and pick up the pilot. I arrived from Leith in the *Ivanhoe*, a venerable paddle-tub, which subsequently went down with all hands. We were more fortunate, though our escape from shipwreck was well-nigh as providential as the deliverance of St Paul. We carried a cargo of pig-iron, and it was said to have deranged the compasses. Anyhow, when the fog thinned a bit and our skipper got his bearings, we were half a score of miles to the north of the Maas, and perilously embayed among shoals and sandbanks. No one could have reproached him





The Fish Market—Utrecht.

To face p. 2



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with reckless navigation, for we had taken things as leisurely as Ulysses, but it may be doubted whether such an experience is possible now.

Often have I wished since then that one could revive the intense vividness of those fresh impressions. Like snatches of old songs, crooned to you in the nursery, they cling to the memory, when much that is more recent has been effaced or grown dim. The Dutch phlegm of the pilot, in shaggy pea-jacket and dripping beaver hat, as he lounged on board in his own little cloud of tobacco from the china pipe, was in perfect keeping with the lifting vapours, with the leaden skies, and the sluggish flow of the turbid river, heavy with the mud of the Low Countries and the gravel of the Ardennes. As we steamed slowly by with the current, we had time enough to be depressed by the tameness of the flats, stretching away to a vague watery horizon, only broken by an occasional steeple or the sails of the innumerable windmills, or enlivened by dreamy groups of the gaunt black and white cattle. Now disembarking at the Hook, with luggage booked through to Cologne or Frankfort, you are whirled into Rotterdam station before you have well adjusted your wraps.

The longest voyage will come to an end, and at last we bring up at our moorings by the Boompjes. Since then Rotterdam, running Antwerp hard, has fairly distanced the Flemish port, and the gains of a rapidly-increasing commerce have been judiciously reinvested in wharves and docks and in deepening the river channels. The city has stretched out in commodious suburbs, and public gardens have been laid out by the most expert of the skilled Dutch horticulturists. But even fifty years ago, with a growing trade, it was one of the three great gates to Northern Europe. Hood, in his "Up the Rhine," called it "a sort of vulgar Venice," and in his time it still berthed many a ship from the Spice Islands, with bow-windowed poop and the build of those Indiamen in which Philip Vanderdecker went in search of the Flying Dutchman. When I strolled on them myself, I saw the Boompjes stacked with rare woods from the South Seas, and the fragrance of cinnamon and coffee was wafted from the bonded warehouses. But all the bustle—such as it was—was on the river front, and the back canals that floated barges through the streets and *grachts* were somniferous and odoriferous as the Grand Canal above the Rialto. If there were no palaces with

the salt seaweed clinging to their marble, there were trim houses with their tiny reflecting mirrors and bright brass knockers looking out upon stagnant water carpeted with duckweed. It was a strange blending of filth and cleanliness, of eccentric taste and stolid conservatism. The houses with their spotless steps smelt strongly of soap-suds; the house barges were gaily decorated, and over the after-cabin were hanging flower gardens; but ashore or afloat, the prevailing odours were salt herrings, rancid tobacco, and floating garbage. Since then Rotterdam has been waking up; seemingly the canals are flushed at short intervals, and the Dutch, who were always a cleanly folk, have made creditable progress in scientific sanitation.

In those days tourists were comparatively rare, and there were no cheap trippers. The road to Rhineland lay through Antwerp or Ostend, and there were no services of swift steamers with trains in correspondence by Harwich and the Hook or Queensborough and Flushing. Consequently the inns, for the most part, left much to be desired in accommodation and *cuisine*, though everything about them was scrupulously clean. Rotterdam, as the great landing-place, was rather an excep-

tion; there were two hotels of some pretensions—the new Bath and the Pays Bas; yet even these were behind the times. The Red Hand-Book, though many editions, had a stereotyped passage, stating that tea was to be had good in Holland and some of the great cities in Germany. The tea may have been good, but the making was detestable, and the milk—for cream there was none—was watery, as everything in the country. Indeed I never had a decent cup in any Continental hotel till the Nord was opened at Cologne. My companion ordered coffee at the Bath, as a matter of course. What most impressed my inexperience was the wine carte. Claret, in the way of common drink, seemed the height of luxury. Disillusion followed when the tap was tried, for the Medoc, a fifth-rate growth of the Gironde, was a sad come-down from the Lafittes and the Leovilles of the old established firms in Edinburgh and Leith. In the matter of hotels, the Hague was a town apart, and cosmopolitan rather than Dutch; the diplomats had introduced the French *cuisine*, and Paulez or the Bellevue had gay airs of French coquetry, with balconies bright with flowers, and vestibules scented with orange blossom.

Nothing, on the other hand, could be more

homely than the hostelrys in the commercial capital. At Amsterdam, Brack's Doelen looked across a narrow canal into the windows of Hardenberg's Old Bible. The quaint old names struck the note of the domestic economy; and though the fare was plentiful enough, Puritans might have been satisfied with its simplicity. Yet to the stranger, the novel arrangements had an attraction of their own, from the Gouda cheese on the breakfast table to the heterogeneously served dinner, which prepared one for the eccentricities of German *tables d'hôte*.

Elsewhere, the quarters were always matter of anxious speculation. You hoped the best, but feared the worst. At Leyden, for example, the scene of the memorable siege and the seat of the famous university, the best of the inns was so bad that it did not tempt you to linger. In Haarlem you fared somewhat better, for British buyers travelling in the bulb business had brought their hosts more up to the mark. But the most diversified experiences were in the dead cities of the Zuyder Zee. Eggs were forthcoming, and generally fowls; as for cheeses, they were piled up like cannon-shot in the weigh-houses, and under cover on the quays. But unless you

turned up immediately after the market day, you had to put up with Lenten fare. Sometimes, as at Hoorn, we were tantalised by conjuring up a Barmecide feast, in pitiful contrast with the meagre reality. There we dined in a magnificent *salon* with gilded cornices and rare mahogany panelling. Those cornices were sadly tarnished, and the cracked mirror, that must have been priceless in its pristine splendour, distorted the features hideously. In a corner was a cabinet, which even then would have fetched much money in Wardour Street. A merry mansion, no doubt, in days of yore, when Van der Helst's gay cavaliers and portly burghers revelled over celebrations of treaties of Munster. Since then the Dutch had been driven to economise: there were no resident magnates in historic Hoorn, and even the great North Holland canal had done little to revive prosperity in the moribund cities.

As for that rare cabinet, doubtless it has gone long ago. Since then the speculative buyer and the roving amateur have made a pretty clean sweep of the curios of Old Holland. Even the Conservative fishing folk of Marken have at last been tempted, at a price, to part with their cherished possessions, and Birmingham has done a lucrative

business in vamping up new lamps to sell for old. Then the costumes of North Holland, of Friesland and the islands, were still common in the streets of Amsterdam. I recollect the wedding party from Harlingen we met in the dimly-lighted rooms of the Treppenhuis. They might have stepped out of one of the pictures by Teniers or Ostade. The women were sheathed in cuirassed bodices of silver 'broidery, and their wealth of hair rose in towering structures, secured by a multiplicity of silver pins and skewers. Matrons and maidens wore golden chains, and the former carried frailer heirlooms in falls and pinner of exquisite lace. What a contrast with their working-day attire of mob-caps and the closely-reefed aprons that held the petticoats half-tucked up! The men, who only opened their clothes-chests of a Sunday, were in such gala dress as they might have worn when they celebrated the deliverance of the United Provinces; and the scent of lavender and rosemary that hung about them almost drowned the odours of tobacco and Schiedam. It was nothing of a sight in those days: no Dutchman turned his head.

The Treppenhuis itself was a survival. It has gone, or been emptied of its treasures, and I am

sorry for it. The grand new gallery is an improvement, no doubt; but centralization and improvements play the mischief with sentiment. The statesmen of Van der Helst and the burgomasters of Franz Hals hung appropriately on the walls of apartments they had trodden. For each detail in the Treppenhuis took you back to the Netherlands of the sixteenth century. There were portraits framed in Cordovan leather—prizes stripped from the cabins of Spanish galleons; there were richly chased cups in gold, and tankards in silver, that might possibly have been wrought by the chisel of Cellini; Venetian candelabra swinging from the golden ceilings; Scandinavian drinking horns set with uncut jewels, and shelves loaded with illuminated missals, and rare volumes in vellum. The Treppenhuis was the microcosm of the glories and struggles of Holland—unique in its way as the Rome of St Peter's.

The charm of the Dutch galleries was in this, that their life was still real to you. In slightly modernised dress the boors of Teniers and Ostade were still drinking in the pot-houses; the fishing craft in the sea pieces of marine painters had scarcely changed their build or rig; the North Sea Canal was still undreamed of; there were few

steam tugs, and no steam trawlers. Holland was only half awake. Amsterdam was planning new engineering works, but meantime, old piles were rotting, foundations subsiding, and channels silting up. The sombre Jews' quarter could have changed little since Rembrandt had his abode there, to look out for studies of patriarchal heads and see Oriental lights and shadows from his studio windows. The Jews had been cherished as valuable citizens. In the way of usury, it would have been hard to get a living out of the Dutchmen, but they dealt in everything from diamonds to salt cod. Hard times, changes in trade routes, wars abroad and at home, and decline of colonial revenue had driven the Hollanders to economise; and what struck one in the hotels and out of them was the general frugality. It is true that living was dear; as the guide-books said, a guilder went scarcely farther than a franc or a shilling elsewhere; but the sole extravagances of thriving commercial folk seemed to be in summer houses and flower gardens. Really nothing could have been more to their credit, for if they pinched in private expenses, they were prodigal in far-sighted public works. Many years later I happened to call one morning on Sir John Hawkshaw, whose acquaint-

ance I had made at the opening of the Suez Canal. He chanced to say that if I was interested in canals, I had better run over to Holland, as the trial trip through the North Sea Canal—which he had engineered—was to come off next day. That night I started for Harwich, and was in Amsterdam in time for the start, with a note of introduction to Sir John's representative. The President and Council were on board the steamer, and each steeple and windmill between the great sluice gates and the sea was decked out with a gorgeous display of bunting. The canal had been cut, regardless of cost: the mere outlay on those stupendous sluice gates was enormous. Nothing could exceed the kindly hospitality of the entertainers, but it was characteristic that we had light claret for champagne, and slices of cold beef for *entrées* and *entremets*. *En revanche* there was an abundance of strong spirits and cigars. I remarked to one of the directors on a coquettish little villa, standing in a blaze of bloom below the canal level, that it was charming, but must be decidedly damp in autumn. "We are used to damp here, and know how to correct it," he replied, tossing off another caulker of Schiedam, and handing over his cigar-case with a smile.

The indefatigable industry of the Dutch has been as proverbial as their enterprise and frugality. The indomitable little nation, who called the Ocean to the relief of Leyden, and long disputed the sovereignty of the seas with England, has a record it would be hard to beat. But they took things leisurely, and the Holland of half a century ago might have taken the *treykschuyt* for its emblem. The *treykschuyt* was going out before my time, and I never travelled by it, though it was still plying between sleepy cities in the backwaters. It never professed the luxury of the Flemish canal boats, where the *cuisine* was so good and cheap, that some of our veterans, retired after the long war, are said to have passed their lives in going to and fro between Ostend and Brussels. But though slow, it was sure and extremely punctual. The single elephantine horse, from Friesland or the Gueldres marshes, might be relied on to do his three miles an hour, and the fare was about a penny a mile, with a trifling tip to the postillion. Then came the railways, another of the engineering triumphs of the amphibious race, when the quaking way was sometimes laid on submerged fascines, or on soil more treacherous than Chat Moss. The 24 miles from Leyden to Amsterdam

were covered at the unprecedented pace of 18 miles an hour. The merchants of Rotterdam and Amsterdam had been making money fast; their engineering had brought deep-sea steamers to their wharves; the new docks were crowded with shipping, and with new facilities for suburban travel, they deserted the town mansion for the villa. Dr Carlyle remarked, a hundred and fifty years ago, that the pleasure-houses and flower gardens in the skirts of the towns showed "a profusion of the rich and gaudy effects of opulence without taste." I fear that much the same might have been said a hundred years later, when the wealthy burghers went further afield for their *villegiatura*. Scheveningen became the Brighton of Rotterdam and the Hague, and began to attract the rank and royalty of Germany. Haarlem, on its spit of sand between the Y and the ocean, was the Richmond or Ascot of Amsterdam, with ozone in the breezes from whatever quarter they blew. Country houses had sprung up like mushrooms on the *grund* of the old Haarlem Meer. But the Dutchmen, with crude, æsthetic notions, had imported French architects and the cockneydom of Romainville or Enghien, as they imported Parisian fashions for their wives. After

L] VANDALISM AT HAARLEM 15

all, architecture is matter of taste, and one need not greatly object to bastard Gothic, with Byzantine cupolas and *mansarde* roofs. But we must deplore the sacrilegious vandalism of the municipalities, though growing towns will burst the girdle of their ramparts and sanitation has its claims. Leyden and Utrecht, the seats of venerable universities, have been changing, but Haarlem, to the lover of the picturesque, has been most sadly transmogrified by "improvements." One feels that the city of the martyrs and heroes of the siege should have been preserved, like Stonehenge, as a national monument. Naturally, sentiment did not appeal to its prosperous citizens, and they did not see that the sufferings of their progenitors should doom them to an eternity of crowding and self-sacrifice. In any case they would have been submerged in the spring-tides of prosperity. As money flowed in, the municipality moved with the times, and the quaint old town has been Hausmanised, though on no regular system. Gabled houses, restored after the siege, stand gable on, encroaching on narrow thoroughfares, and rubbing shoulders with bright-new edifices in red brick. Tramways run along brand-new boulevards where the canals have been filled up;



and the embattled gateway that repelled the soldiers of Ferdinand of Toledo stands solitary in its picturesque isolation, like an obelisk or the ruins of Thebes or the temples at Tadmor in the wilderness. The ramparts have been levelled, the bastions swept away, and the town-crier in trappings of woe—last relic of the olden time—who used to make solemn announcement of funerals, may have vanished with the rest, for all I know to the contrary.



The Amsterdam Port-Haven.

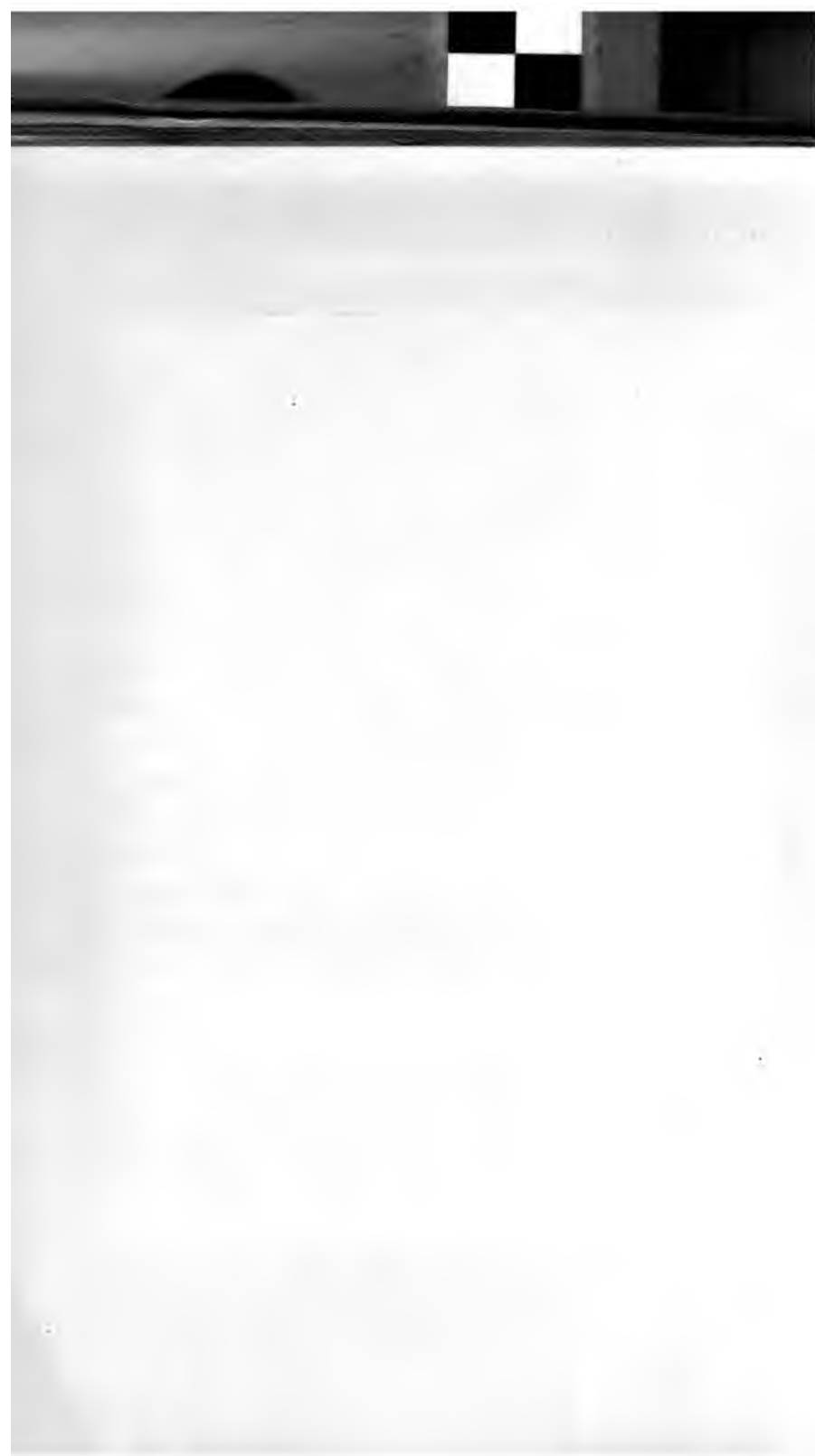


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The Amsterdamster Poort—Haarlem.

To face p. 16







CHAPTER II

TRAVEL IN THE LOW COUNTRIES

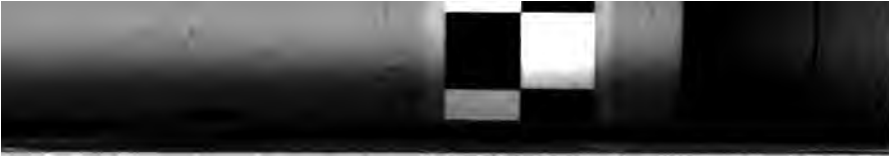
HOLLAND in every sense is a country by itself, and it was a pleasant change to Belgium. With all your admiration for the great qualities of the Dutch, and the dogged efforts that have assured their prosperity, you tire of the *triste* monotony of the scenery. Passing from Rotterdam to Antwerp, you understand at once how Holland and Zeeland held to their motto of *luctor et emergo* when the rest of the revolted provinces slipped back under the yoke of Spain. To the north of the Scheldt lives a hard-bitten generation, Calvinists by predestination, broken to immemorial endurance, and to the eternal battles with the winds and the waters. To the south were the rich plains of Flanders and Southern Brabant, swarming with a busy industrial population, sensuous by temperament, and Catholic by predilection, for, like the seigneurs, they delighted in show

and ceremonial. It was the land of the wealthiest chivalry in Europe, of the symbolical Order of the Golden Fleece, and the Battle of the Spurs of Gold, of sumptuous tournaments and gorgeous processions, of rich bishoprics and fat benefices, of flamboyant Gothic architecture, adorned by the great masters whose genius had been fostered by Church and Crown, by wealthy guilds and magnificent municipalities. For in the Flanders of that Battle of the Spurs, the burghers, like Jeshurun, had grown fat and kicked, and the overgrown hives of commerce and industry—from Bruges of the wool-staplers to Liège of the metal-workers—swarmed with a stinging populace, entrenched in their labyrinths of alleys and canals. The merchants in their domestic interiors rivalled the opulence of monarchs, and the toilers rose in response to the clanging of their belfries at each rise in the prices of bread and beer.

Fifty years ago the Low Countries were still a land of good living and extraordinarily cheap. Since then there is rail from Rotterdam to Antwerp, and I doubt if any passenger steamers now take the water route through the half-submerged islands. In any case they can only count upon local traffic, nor could they afford to



The Cathedral—Hansford.



The Cathedral—Haarlem.

To face p. 18





II.] LENTEN FARE AT BRUGES 19

run such a table as I remember. In its liberality as well as its charges, the change from Holland was marked. It prepared one for the luxuries and French *cuisine* of the Antwerp hotels—the L'Europe and the Grand Laboureur, to the latter of which, it may be remembered, Scott helped a Highland soldier when they began by misunderstanding each other in French, afterwards relapsing into the vernacular. It was the same everywhere, of course with more or less pretension, even in the inns in the remote Ardennes, where you put up for fishing or shooting. In Bruges, almost as much a city of the dead as Hoorn or Enkhuizen, there was one cheery spot, the *salle à manger* of the Hôtel de Flandres, famous for its fish dinners of a Friday. In variety of fishes of the fresh water, at least, it rivalled the Ship at Greenwich, and the sauces which smothered the insipidity of perch and dace were transcendental. It used to be said that the fantastic decorations of the ceiling were significant of the strange viands figuring on the table. Be that as it may, the dinners were uncommonly good, and there was no lack of well-favoured priests to bless the fare, with fuller jowls than any Rhine salmon, and napkins tucked in under the folds of their

chins. At Brussels was a cluster of hotels round the Place Royale, which stood on great reputations and ran each other hard. All were celebrated in the War memories of 1815—and in fiction. It was at the Hotel du Parc that the elder Osborne put up when he went on his penitential pilgrimage to Waterloo, but I never knew it. Connoisseurs said that the Flandres, patronized by diplomatists, had a trifle the best of it; but even Admiral Rous would have been puzzled to handicap the rivals. My house of resort was the Bellevue, and it would have been difficult to better it. At the six o'clock *table d'hôte*, old Madame Proft took the head of her table in the good old Flemish or German fashion, supported by a couple of married sons and as many blooming daughters. The soup was sent up to the minute, and if you did not start fair, you had never a chance of recovering yourself. For a long hour there came a swift succession of dishes in duplicate; *entrées* were followed by saddles and sirloins in pairs to satisfy English tastes; the strawberry and melon beds of Boisfort were laid under contribution for the dessert; and the charge, if I remember, was three francs. This in the most fashionable hotel of the gayest little capital in Europe. I know that my

The House of the Future







II] LUXURIES OF THE CAPITAL 21

cicerone in Brussels, on my first visit, was an old Scottish gentleman, a notable *gourmet*, who had run through a fine fortune and was exiled on a small annuity. He had his quarters in the Tirlemont, a third-rate house, where he lived fabulously cheaply *en pension*, and though he grumbled at a garret bed-room, he had nothing but praise for the fare. In those days there was no Ostend so far as grand hotels and extravagant restaurants on the sea front were concerned, and Spa, oddly enough, was, and I believe always has been, an exception. Even now the hotels are behind the age; some of them charge unconscionably, in and out of season, or, at least, they try it on. The Britannique, as I used to know it, was moderate and satisfactory, but in the second week, the excellent *menu* became monotonous.

In the days before the rush you had opportunities of making friends with the landlord, and it was well to do so. He was generally a politician, and if you stretched your conscience and sympathised with his clerical or progressive opinions, he took you to his heart. A special message sent down to the kitchen would result in truffling the red partridge for supper, or in sending up a woodcock on truffled toast. What

was even more to the purpose, in those days, there were bins in certain cellars which were only drawn upon on exceptional occasions by special favour. Romanée or Clos Vougeot were floated from the Burgundian vineyards, with no shaking of the bottles. I remember once at a little inn at St Hubert talking the host into such high good humour, after a gift of a couple of hares, that he cradled a cobwebbed flask of Romanée, and would not hear of hinting at it in the bill. It was less surprising that once when I lunched with a friendly master of forges in the L'Europe at Liège, the Burgundy brought up by the landlord, who sat down with us, was simply nectar. One may safely say, with *laudatores temporis acti*, "You get no such wine in Belgium nowadays."

The dining on the Rotterdam and Antwerp boat has tempted me into divagations, but divagation was the charm of old-time travel. Few would care to take a ticket for such a passage now. We wound through the islands and threaded the shoals by shifting channels, marked out by branches stuck in the mud. We ran upon one of these shoals, backed the engines, gave it up as a bad job, and smoked our pipes from

the skipper downwards, till the rising tide floated us off. Yet the voyage was rich in historical interest and in recollections of sensational exploits that have never since been surpassed in war. There the Spanish veterans, as daring as they were cruel, waged amphibious war with the fierce "beggars of the sea." To the right we saw Schowen, and its capital Zierikzee, relieved by the memorable expedition under Requesens, when D'Ulloa, at the head of his serried column, waded the tidal channel breast high, in face of the fire of the Dutch flotilla, and scattered a beleaguering force three times his strength. Now Schowen is one of the forgotten spots of history.

One might almost say the same of Bruges, for if not forgotten it is neglected. The solitude struck the poetical imagination of Southey when he visited it in 1815, and then it had been waking up to the echoes of the war. "Bruges is, without exception, the most striking place I ever visited, though it owes nothing to situation. It seems to have remained in the same state for some two hundred years; nothing has been added, and hardly anything gone to decay. . . . The air of antiquity and perfect preservation is such that it carries you back to the age of the Tudors or of Froissart."

So it was when I first saw it: so it is, and so it is likely to remain. There are English who have seen a great deal too much of it, for it has always been an asylum for impecunious respectability. It has become what Boulogne used to be to the spendthrifts and prodigals of the Regency. And perhaps it is natural that half-pay officers and superannuated civilians should be indifferent to the sentiment of the picturesque stagnation and the faded memories of the past. But if, like Mr Tupman, you are disgusted with the world and in search of a temporary retreat, I know no more eligible place than Bruges. There is an English club, where you can hold converse with your countrymen. If you tire of solitude, and care to break the seclusion, there is Brussels on the one side and Ostend on the other, both within easy reach. But the venerable mart of the Middle Ages is rich in a variety of interests, and in Longfellow's *Belfry of Bruges* you have the most eloquent of historical guides. I was primed with Longfellow when I first stopped there, and there for the first time I was entranced with the Belgian chimes. So strong was the solemn and suggestive impression that it was rather a pleasure to lie awake and listen. The first stranger I came across

II.] THE MASTERPIECE OF MEMLINE 25

in the *salon* of the Flandre was an English artist, engaged to restore the paintings of the Chapel of the Holy Blood. He had explored each nook and corner in the town, and guided me to all that was best worth seeing. The mysterious Memline is enshrined in the Hospital of St John, and his memorial is the Shrine of St Ursula. Mysterious, for like Melchizedek, no one can say where he was born, or where he died, and even the dates of the time of his flourishing are doubtful. I was fortunate in an appreciative critic to indicate the exuberant richness of his fancy and interpret the meaning and inexhaustible charm of his work. The worst was that even the Van Eyks paled after him; he made the "Adoration of the Lamb," in St Bavon of Ghent, something of a disappointment: and the Meisters Stephen and Wilhelm of Cologne seemed only to touch the grotesque or the ridiculous. Memline's work on the shrine, and the admirable triptychs on the walls present the strangest contrasts. The backgrounds and what one may call the "properties" are purely Flemish; he fills in the backgrounds with Flemish buildings, and dresses his virgins and British warriors in the costumes of his period. But the faces of his saints, angels, and martyrs have the ineffable sweetness of

the Raphaels, with nothing of the somewhat insipid monotony of Fra Angelico, and less of Leonardo's simpering sanctity. I daresay I may be heterodox, but I speak my thoughts. In the faces, with their infinite variety of expression, you see spiritual life in visible action, and sometimes with a strong underflow of terrestrial passion. And he is daring as Dante or Milton in his conceptions of the incarnate Trinity. As I have dallied for a week at a time in Dresden, in an adoring flirtation with the Madonna di San Sisto, so for a week at least I should scarcely feel dull in Bruges, with the Council Chamber of St John's for a place of resort and meditation.

Then by contrast, little Brussels was brightness itself. It was the veriest *bijou* of a lively capital—a Petit Paris, to borrow the name of a comfortable little Strasburg hotel. It was Paris in miniature, and, in some ways, as About's M. Le Roi would have said, *en mieux*. The Bois de la Cambre, fringing the broad and straggling forest of Soignies, was a more sylvan Bois de Boulogne. There were suburban boulevards in the fashionable Quartier Léopold, but as yet it had not been Haussmanised, nor had the speculative builder broken loose. The new city to the westward, with

its lofty, stuccoed façades, *mansarde* roofs, and sumptuous public edifices, had scarcely been called into existence. Any one who knew the ropes of fashion could soon identify the few stylish equipages which rolled westwards of an afternoon for the promenade in the Bois. Brussels was the last place in the world where an absconding debtor or defaulter should have sought to conceal himself, for everybody knew everybody else by sight. Of course, if he dived into the darkness of the lower town, it was a different thing, for in older Brussels, as in the Jerusalem of the siege, there were three distinct cities. There was the zone of fashion, the zone of trade, and the zone of commerce, though the inhabitants of the two former intermingled. You plunged down the steep Montagne de la Cour to do your shopping, to be brought up by the long cross street leading to the railway station, where the excellent hotels—rather of the second class—de Suède, de Saxe, and de L'Univers, did a lucrative business, chiefly with native Flemings and commercial travellers. Already you seemed to touch the country there, for some of them looked into great gardens or orchards. Few tourists ever strayed further to the south, though beyond was a quarter, almost as

picturesque and as genuinely national as the venerable Grande Place. You were in the port of the capital where the net-work of canals was cumbered with barges unloading produce from the Rhine, from Holland and the industries of Flanders. The "longshore" population had little intercourse with the aristocrats of the heights and the shopkeepers of the slopes. Stolid, industrious, and contented, they smoked their tobacco and swilled their sour beer, indifferent to organisations of labour and seldom indulging in the luxury of strikes. Now with the competition of the railways a great part of their old occupation is gone, and many of their flat-bottomed barges have long ago been broken up for firewood. The bargeman has been giving way to the artisan, who is always complaining of over-crowding. And the conspicuous symbol of the change is the Boulevard Anspach, drawn with a ruler like the Russian railways, which has been driven across the northern confines of the mariners' quarter. The omnibuses are continually going and coming from the courtyard of a Grand Hotel, modelled on its prototype of Paris; counterparts of *Le bon Diable* and *La belle Jardinière* flaunt their ready-made costumes for the seduction of clerks and



II.] THE SHOWMEN OF WATERLOO 29

shop-girls, and if you cross the broad thoroughfare after closing hours, it is at the peril of your life with the crowd and crush of cycles. After dark it is illuminated with the flashes of their flitting lamps, like a host of dancing will-o'-the-wisps, or the fireflies that gem a tropical night.

In truth, the gay but homely little capital has transformed itself altogether, and now I never care to linger there. The motor car and the tramcar have come in with the cycle, and though you may go from the Place Royale to the Eastern Railway Station—as you may from the Piazza d'Espagna to the Vatican—for a couple of sous, it is not an unmitigated blessing. Thank Heaven, they can never run the cars down the Montagne de la Cour, though, very probably, in another decade, it may be scaled by lifts or surmounted by electricity!

Forty-five years ago, the first duty of the British tourist was to visit the field of Waterloo. The impostor who asserted he had stood at Napoleon's elbow was dead, and the worthy Sergeant Cotton had been gathered to his fathers. But there were still plausible rustics doing a good stroke of business as guides who professed to have been spectators of the battle, and doubtless some of



them had been skulking within hearing of the cannon. Like the Marchioness in "The Old Curiosity Shop," if you made believe very much, their fluency gave a zest to their feigned reminiscences. And though the bloody manœuvring ground had been cut about to build the mound of the Belgian lion, the years had done little to dilapidate the old château and the Flemish farmhouse, scorched by flames and riddled with shot. It was good business to preserve these relics, and Hougomont, with its outbuildings and its walled enclosures, was much as it had been when held by the guards, who lay sleeping under the rank growth of fruit bushes and nettles. Since then many another decisive battle has been fought, and Waterloo is ancient history. Then it was still the battle of the century. The evening before I drove there, I was asked to dine with an old general officer of artillery, who had taken up his abode in Brussels. It was the sorrow of his life that he had missed Waterloo, for then he was with his battery before New Orleans. But he chanced to be an intimate friend of Lord Saltoun, the veritable hero of Hougomont; he had known Siborne, the historiographer of the battle-field, and he was familiar with each detail of the fighting,

from Quatre Bras to the last and decisive counter-charge. He good-naturedly said that he would have done the honours of the field had he not been crippled by gout. However, drawing plans on the table with his chalky fingers, he fired me with a double portion of his own enthusiasm. And, by the way, he was a splendid type of the true-bred British bull-dog, which indeed he resembled, with the massive jaw and the heavy jowl. His own record was a romantic one, though he never alluded to it. He had been caught by the French in a thick snow-drift in the Pyrenees; had refused his parole; had been lashed to a gun carriage, and sent back across the Bidassoa. Before reaching St Jean de Luz, he managed to give his guardians the slip, and duly reported himself at headquarters in time for the battle of the Nivelle. The old gentleman hobbled round next morning to introduce me to the coachman who worked the Waterloo four-in-hand, which started each morning from a British tavern in the Rue Villa Hermosa. The tavern, with its horsey loungers — English grooms out of place — its fragrance of stale ale, and its advertisements of steaks and chops in the coffee-room, was thoroughly British; the passengers were all British, to a man or woman, for neither French nor Belgians affected

the pilgrimage much. As the horn of the guard woke the echoes of the Montagne, we might have been rattling over the cobble pavements of some market town in the Midlands. The road lay through the forest of Soignies—the Ardennes, as Byron calls it in a flight of poetic fancy. Soignies or Ardennes, it was the road along which Wellington, Picton, and General Tufto had ridden on that memorable morning of the 18th June, with Rawdon Crawley in his shrunken old uniform, conspicuous for shabbiness among the brilliant staff. What struck me was, that when the cannon set them galloping, the legs of their chargers must have been woefully knocked about. Rattling it literally was, and there was no springing the team on the long level from the Boulevard to Waterloo. On the contrary, clever as they were, it was a heavy armful the keeping them on their feet, on the sloping causeway of paving-stones made slippery by a morning shower. The coachman drew a breath of relief when he pulled up at the half-way house and the ostler bought a bucketful of meal and water. In all good fellowship I asked him to step down and have a glass of ale. He civilly declined, with a smile at my innocence, and I understood him when I had my first and



The Church—Dortrecht.

To face p. 32





last sip of the black Belgian beer. Now the bock of the Strasburg brewing is to be had everywhere, and a blessed innovation it is for the Belgians, who are not a wine-growing nation. The coachman, who had worked on the Bristol and Brighton roads, swore confidentially under his breath at the cobbles to which he should have been well accustomed. He was proud of his horses, and with reason, for in their way they were a model team. They could never have gone the pace in the Age or the Comet; they scarcely stood over fifteen hands; but they were compact and deep-chested, well ribbed up, and, unhampered by bearing reins, they drew with the weight as much as the muscle. Their coats shone like silk and their docked tails were bound up with bunches of ribbon. As a Briton, he was bound to draw comparisons to their disadvantage; but it was pretty to see how he humoured them and petted them with the lash twisted round the whipstick.

Talking of those cobby coach-horses carries me off to Spa, where, after the gaieties of Brussels, one could relax in rural solitudes. For at Spa the innkeepers had a breed of well-bred, substantial ponies, said to be of Spanish origin and with a strong dash of blood. They were invaluable for

excursions, whether you drove a lady to a picnic, or trotted out on the saddle with rod or gun, fishing - basket, or game - bag. Then you went by road or hill-track to outlying woods or streams, where now you can travel by rail. The Spa of those days, though "the Spaw" *par excellence*, and the first of continental baths frequented by foreign fashion, was decidedly primitive. I have said that the hotels have never been first-class, and then they were at least as good as they are now. What struck you at once was the exceedingly homely arrangements of the gaming establishment, where in generations gone by the frequenters of White's and Brook's, Watier's and Crockford's, had lost fabulous sums when taking a course of the springs for gout or dyspepsia. In a long and rather ill-lighted room was a range of tables to suit any taste. At one end was a display of the leading and local journals, from the other came the ceaseless click of the roulette ball, and the cry of the croupier at Rouge et Noir—"Messieurs, faites votre jeu—Le jeu est fait." You were looking through letters of the *Times'* correspondents—there were no telegrams in those days—or immersed in the columns of *Galignani*, when

II.] CHARMES OF THE ARDENNES 85

Galignani was really Parisian and interesting, but for the life of you, you could not help lending an ear to the distractions of the tables. Involuntarily your fingers trifled with the Napoleons or five-franc pieces in your pockets: you strolled to the other end of the room: you staked, and you lost them.

But at Spa, as at Baden, with sporting tastes and a certain self-control, you could lead a double life. At Baden the seductions of the Black Forest and its streams rivalled those of the Kursaal. You could put on shooting boots and slip out in rough toilette at the back door, to come back with a keen appetite for late dinner, or you could don patent leathers and a shiny suit of white twills, and fritter away time and money through the afternoon, ruining the digestion with ices and absinthe. So at Spa, the attractions of the Ardennes were great. You do not lose yourself at once, as at Baden, among forest glades, with beds of bracken and carpets of bilberries under colonnades of secular firs. But the scenery has a savage character of its own, the more striking for its contrast with the cultivated flats of Flanders. There was something of witchery in the very names of a region so rich in legend and tradition. If one



86 IN THE LOW COUNTRIES [CHAP.

thought nothing of St Hubert or the Quatre Fils d'Aymon, you knew it had been touched by the magic of Shakespeare, and you remembered "Quentin Durward" and the lair of the Wild Boar. It was delightful to ride or drive on the rugged heaths and inhale the invigorating air. But I am bound to say that when fishing was the object, the expeditions were generally a dead failure. Each of them was a triumph of undying hope over sad experience. You stabled the pony and hurriedly put up the rod, that you might not lose a moment of a most favourable day. Nothing could be more tempting than the look of the water, with its pools and rushes and swirling backflows, but, like the emerald streams of the Pyrenees, it was cruelly deceptive, one reason being, that with the demand for trout at Spa, it was systematically poached and methodically netted.

The wild shooting, on the contrary, was capital, and there was no great difficulty in getting permission, if you made friends with a local landowner at the *table d'hôte* or on the promenade. Then the Belgian sportsmen were pleased to make acquaintance with an English shooter, and though they stuck to strange ways and shot over queer dogs, which they held in the very highest estimation, they

were always on the look-out for a British wrinkle. One of the pleasantest days I ever had was in late autumn, when I offered a gentleman a lift who was plodding Spa-wards with gun and game-bag. The bag was pretty well stuffed. I expressed my admiration, and he delicately condoled with me on an empty fishing-basket. My motives were mixed when I asked him to dine, but that dinner was an excellent investment. Before we parted I had accepted a pressing invitation and made an appointment. He welcomed me at a little inn, and insisted on "calling the bill" for a capital breakfast. It was rough shooting, but carefully watched, for the Belgians, even in the Ardennes, as in the highly-cultivated farms of Brabant, were jealous of any infringement of their rights. We were attended by an old *chasseur*, as familiar with the game, their haunts, and their habits, as any village *shikari* in Indian jungles. We bagged hares, partridges, a brace of wild pheasants, a leash of woodcock, and sundry snipe. It was the first week in October, so there was only one belated quail, but the contents of the bag show the character of the country. Nothing could be prettier, from the keen sportsman's point of view. There were heaths and morasses; coppices of the

water-loving alder and hanging coverts in the valleys, where the brooks would occasionally stagnate in swamp—resorts of the snipe and breeding - places of the wild duck. At that time shootings of the kind could be rented fabulously cheaply. The banker could generally refer you to some land-agent or solicitor, who was well-informed on the subject. I knew of one case where a man got fifty brace of partridges and half as many hares, to say nothing of rabbits, snipe, and waterfowl on a shooting, for which he paid one hundred and fifty francs, renewing the lease through successive seasons. Nor was that exceptional, and the rabbity dunes and sandhills went for next to nothing, but I doubt if the same could be said now.



CHAPTER III

PASSPORTS—CUSTOMS—CURRENCY

WHEN I started on my travels the passport had become a farce, though a thorn in the flesh and a perpetual nuisance. It no longer contained the personal description, often mortifying to the vanity, which Lever ridiculed delightfully in "Harry Lorrequer." All the same, it was imperative to provide yourself with the voucher, and the Foreign Office document with its blazonry, was well worth the additional trifle of cost. Borrow tells how a good many years before, the signature of "Balmerston" impressed a Spanish policeman who could not decipher it. The possessor of a passport who had made the tour of Europe, became *malgré lui*, a rare collector of foreign stamps and autographs. Contemplating a tour after dropping in at Coutts' for your circular notes, the next thing was to betake yourself to Lee, over the way, who made all the necessary

arrangements on commission. He vouched for the applicant's respectability in Downing Street, and collected *visas* of every country you were at all likely to visit. As he impressed upon you, and it was confirmed by Murray, it was well to be on the safe side. Murray and Lee were quite right, for though Clarendon or Malmesbury might pass you over many frontiers with impunity, you never knew when you might be called over the coals. Any sulky subordinate whose supper had disagreed with him had much in his power; it was not pleasant at mirk midnight to be marched off to a police office in place of the hotel, and peremptorily ordered to retrace your steps to some town where you could procure the missing *visa*. The best consolation was that it was a case of live and let live, for the endorsing of passports was a comfortable perquisite which consuls on wretched salaries had every interest in maintaining.

Lee mounted the passport on stout calico, knowing the wear and tear to which it was foredoomed, and bound it in a pocket-book with many leaves. Other leaves were added in successive years, till mine had become quite a bulky volume. I have seldom regretted anything

more than the losing it. Landing at Tower Wharf and driving to Bury Street, in a weak moment I confided my hand-bag to the care of a cousin to whom I had been acting courier. The bag disappeared and the passport with it. It was replaced by another, which I still possess, but in that the many pages are melancholy blanks, for the second Napoleon had set his face against the system, and the sharp old surveillance had fallen into disuse. That lost passport was a record of recent changes: of wars and treaties that had revolutionised kingdoms, subverted dynasties, and effaced frontiers. Moreover, it was a personal remembrance—a short-hand record of romance, incident, and adventure. It reminded me of the shudder with which I first parted with my credentials at Verviers. To be sure, my uneasiness was speedily relieved, when it was restored on the Prussian frontier at Herbesthal. To the last, when a more hardened tourist, I never felt altogether safe when I had handed it over by dim lantern light to some shady official of the Pope or the King of Naples, when conspiracy was rampant and suspicion in the air. I might have been reassured by knowing that the man could gain nothing by keeping it but would get some-

thing by bringing it back, and in those days there was no hanger-on of Pio Nono or King Bomba who would not have risked his soul for a scudo. Yet sometimes then, even with passports strictly *en règle*, there were awkward complications. The *régime* in Tuscany was comparatively liberal, and the police gave little trouble. But one evening, after a *vettura* drive along the Eastern Riviera, I arrived at Florence with a companion. We were invited to descend at the gate and were walked into a guard-room. The officer in charge looked scrutinisingly at my companion—an Edinburgh advocate, of antiquarian and artistic tastes, who afterwards filled a high official position. To tell the truth, as Lord Lyons said of himself, when Minister at Rome, his dress was plain to meanness, and he wore a most villainous slouch grey hat. He laid down the hat on a table while his passport was being carefully scanned. An intelligent officer picked it up and read on the lining the name Mazzini—at that time a name to conjure the devil with—the fact being that it had been bought in Genoa from a namesake of the great revolutionary. Expostulation and explanations were vain; it was useless for him to explain in fluent Italian that he could not be held responsible for

the patronymic of the hatter; he was kept for the night under lock and key, and when released by the interference of Her Majesty's Minister, had to be content with a grudging apology. If he did not wish to be mistaken for Mazzini, why did he wear the name in his hat?

The customs are a trouble that will be always with the traveller, but they are less of a nuisance than they used to be. *Diligences*, posting and slower trains gave the officers more time to make themselves obnoxious. One had a first taste of that in going up the Maas, when the officials came on board at the mouth of the river. They smoked their pipes and turned everything topsy-turvy, though rather for occupation than anything else. The Zollverein was an unmixed blessing, for it embraced all Germany, with exception of the Austrian States. The starched Prussians did their duty austere, but with them and the Frenchmen and the Austrians, you knew where you were. If not absolutely incorruptible, it was risky to offer a bribe. As for the easy-going Swiss, they never bothered about light luggage. Ladies with many boxes had their worries, no doubt. Rough hands might make wild work with delicate dresses, and on slight suspicion even underwear was indiscreetly

exposed in search of jewellery or smuggled laces. There was reason for it, for sometimes a woman who imprudently wore a multiplicity of wrappings in July would be handed over to the female searchers, to come back much slimmer and lighter than she went. But the old traveller with a couple of portmanteaux had no trouble if he were honest. He had only to produce tobacco and declare. It was cheaper in the end; it saved previous anxiety, to say nothing of salving the conscience. As a rule, the veterans of the *douane* were shrewd judges of men. I remember a shady gentleman in seedy raiment trying on that dodge of showing a handful of black cigars with an inimitable air of candour, when my own light luggage had passed scot-free. The officer looked him over, threw out the contents of his box, and lighted on some packets of kid gloves and sundry boxes of Cabanas. On the other hand, there were articles, the import of which was absolutely forbidden; the temptation to smuggle was sometimes strong, but it was an excessively risky proceeding. I crossed over from Dover to Calais, and got into talk with a fellow-passenger whom I had known by name and sight. It was the time when Jules Gérard and Bombonnel had been hunting down the

III] SPORTSMAN AND SMUGGLER 45

lions and leopards of the desert, and he was on his way to shoot in Algeria. He was the last man to have defrauded the customs, but he had a firm faith in English powder, which was taboo in France. Over a pea-jacket he wore one of the Inverness capes which were then the fashion, and it bulged out like a crinoline. I warned him that he was a walking monstrosity, but he would not listen to reason and refused to jettison any part of his cargo. His hesitation when he declared he had nothing to declare was enough to betray him. The officer passed a hand down either side and then marched him off for unloading. Pocket after pocket was persuaded to disgorge till the counter was piled with canisters of Curtis and Harvey. It was likely to prove a troublesome business. Fortunately, I knew the British Consul and so did the Chief of the Customs; by free use of his name I passed my companion, but the goods were confiscated, the officer patriotically assuring the victim that far better powder was to be bought in Paris.

To the south of the Alps there was no difficulty whatever. It was simply a question of bribery, and the tariff of corruption was low. I believe couriers in the service of English families



had no more profitable perquisite than bribing the dogana for a trifle and charging it tenfold in the bills. I used to pity any one who travelled in Italy then, objecting on principle to imposition or corruption, and a hot-tempered man who cut up rough and refused to pay when awakened out of troubled slumbers was in equally evil case. You were perpetually, when posting or travelling by *vettura*, pulled up at the frontiers of petty states, and the grasping Jacks-in-office had much in their power. When stopped of an evening at the *octroi* of some dead-alive town, and anxious to get to the inn and go to bed, your luggage might be handed down for inspection — there were always ruffians eager to assist in unpacking, and ready to help themselves when your back was turned. The Austrian *douaniers* and the Tuscans were comparatively respectable, but things were even worse in Naples than in the Papal States, which is saying a great deal. The brigands who made the Apennines a terror to travellers had been put down, but they had passed into the service of the customs. Thirty years later things had not greatly improved under the *régime* of a United Italy. I once landed at Naples, sadly out of temper after a stormy voyage from Messina. Very foolishly

III.] TROUBLE WITH THE OCTROI 47

I declined to tip the *octroi* searcher, who was in waiting at the gangway. I passed on, he passed the word, and three times was my portmanteau ransacked on the pier before I saw it put on the *fiacre*. The officers were strictly in their rights and it was idiotic to refuse to bribe them.

In point of *octrois* the most objectionable country to travel in was Spain. Each province, from Catalonia to Andalusia, asserted its traditional independence by setting up barriers at the frontier. Each town and hamlet was as jealous of its neighbour as when Cervantes told the story of the battle of the villages. They would overhaul a pair of saddle-bags in search of sausages or chocolate or any comestible liable to duty. But even at the gates of Paris you were never safe. Generally the stoppage of the *fiacre* was a mere formality, but once I was pulled up near the Gare du Nord by the most suspicious and conscientious officer I have come across. He made the usual demand, which was answered in the negative. Then looking at me solemnly, as if he would search my heart, he said in sepulchral tones: "Vous êtes bien sur, Monsieur, que vous n'avez pas de viande froide?"

Next to tobacco, Tauchnitz editions were the

temptations of the tourist. The one taxed his conscience going abroad, and the other when coming home. To put a volume or two in your pockets came naturally to human frailty, but more wholesale transactions were perilous, and the Leipsic Baron has much to answer for. Once when my hand-bag was overhauled at Folkestone, the officers made a trifling capture—really there was always considerable excuse, for the volumes were portable and pleasant reading. So thought my companion—a young clergyman, and now a church dignitary of high repute. He smiled maliciously at my discomfiture, for we had had a previous discussion on the subject, but his ordeal was to come. He had been travelling in the East and had a shameful quantity of baggage, among other things an enormous leather bag, which he boasted no officer had ever dared to fathom. There, under the upper layer of clothes, he had stowed away some cherished companions of his wanderings. A zealous officer unpacked that bag, came upon the deposit of the Tauchnitz, and turned out the contents. His comrades had gathered round to look on, and when a couple of half-torpid scorpions emerged, there was general sensation. My friend had

brought olive wood from the Mount, and water for christenings from the Jordan, but those specimens of Syrian zoology were more than he had bargained for.

The confusions of the coinage were a constant worry. There was a legend of a man who went on changing a ten-pound note into the various currencies till it reached the vanishing point, which came much sooner than he expected and all in the regular course. But the inexperienced traveller, with no language but his own, had little chance with the natives. In Holland it was comparatively plain sailing, but when he reached the Rhine his troubles began. In the first place, when he went to cash a circular note, he had generally to engage a *lacquais de place* to guide him to the bankers named in his letter of indication. They lived up darksome alleys or down odoriferous side streets. Their offices, often in a two-pair back, contrasted strangely with Coutts' or Drummond's, and with sometimes a solitary clerk they took existence leisurely. There was no crush at the counter; indeed there was no counter for a crush, and they knocked off work altogether when business was at the briskest in Fleet Street or the Strand, for they dined heavily at mid-day and indulged in

post-prandial tobacco. Sleepy Germany, in those days, was scarcely ahead of Italy, with its *dolce far niente* and siestas. Moreover, they were profoundly ignorant of ordinary matters of form, and preternaturally suspicious of foreigners. I remember at Coblenz wanting a witness to a transfer of stock, and naturally took it to the banker, with a note to be cashed. Vainly I explained that he incurred no liability: no persuasion could induce him to sign. He said if the clerk chose to do so, he had no objections, and the clerk, who was a Teutonic translation of Newman Noggs, helped himself out of my cigar case, and set his name to the writing. As he had less than nothing to lose, he was reckless. The second thing that struck one, and it was a corollary to those mean surroundings, was the scarcity of gold. The mines in California, Australia, and South Africa were yet to be exploited, and if there was glut of gold anywhere, it was never in the Fatherland. Except at the gaming-tables, you seldom saw a Friedrich d'or or a Louis d'or, and you took your change either in ragged paper that would have scandalised a Scottish Bank, or in thalers, double the bulk of an English half-crown, which they scarcely exceeded in value. Evidently the silver



III.] CONFUSIONS OF THE COINAGE 51

was frightfully debased, but the small change in goschen pieces was worn out of all recognition. They might have been struck in the Brandenburg mint in the Thirty Years' War, and circulated in the camps of Wallenstein and Gustavus. Above Coblenz matters were complicated by the florins of Nassau and the South German States, though the florins put the thalers to shame, and were respectable pieces of silver. But stewards of the Rhine steamers reaped a rich harvest from the confusion of the coinages, and the perplexed tourist would hold out a handful in despair and tell the extortioner to help himself.

In Austria even silver was scarce; the paper that passed current was always fluctuating, and sometimes threatened to depreciate like French assignats during the Terror. It was delightful to find yourself on the solid ground of decimal coinage in France and Switzerland. Travellers of our time sin against their mercies when they forget to be grateful for the German Empire and the unification of Italy. South of the Alpine Passes you looked back regretfully to the comparative simplicity of transactions on the Rhine. Johnson advised Boswell to look well at the change for a guinea, as he might



always find some curious coin. With the multiplicity of petty states and their venerable currency you were always happening on coins that must have been curious, could they only have been cleaned and deciphered. But wrangling over small change with a knavish landlord, or being woke up in a night-drive to pay for posting and to tip the driver, was far from favourable to numismatic research. Yet there are pleasant associations with those Roman scudi and Neapolitan carlini. I always associate the one with *confetti* for the carnival, with Roman scarves in blazing colours and the artistic jewellery of Castellani; the other with the huge bouquets of camelias and violets which the girls sold for a bagatelle on the Chiaia and Santa Lucia.

In Italy and Spain the infinitesimal values of the copper rubbish, the reckonings by fractions of soldi and by maravedis, showed the extreme poverty of these countries. In Spain the French five-franc pieces were almost as common as the Spanish duros, and both went a long way. In Germany the heavy coinage was only a nuisance; in the Spanish byways and *dehesas* it was a positive danger. When you went on a riding tour you could only ballast the saddle-bags with

it, and when officious ostlers or waiters disembarassed you of these, they always seemed to be judicially weighing the contents. I daresay they were often suspected unjustly ; in the lack of foreign travellers there was no such organised confederacy as in South Italy, where the brigands used to have their spies in each *Albergo* and *Osteria*. But in the Sierras, where there were no regular brigand bands, there was always a sprinkling of the *ratero* or footpad. The safest plan was to reduce the silver to a minimum, which conduced to economy—if you knew your guide you could take him into your confidence—and carry a reserve of gold in a belt strapped round the waist. I always wore that belt when travelling with the lightest possible luggage with troops in war time, and even in peace I have resorted to simple dodges for keeping my money safe. It was hazardous carrying circular notes or English bank-notes on the person, with the possibility of having the pocket picked, and there was even less security in the lock of a portmanteau. So I used to stow paper and specie between the blankets of the bed and the mattress, where they were safe from anything save a sudden fire.



CHAPTER IV

RHINELAND

THE first glimpse of the Upper Rhine was an era, like the sighting of Holland, or, rather, like the vision of the dome of St Peter's rising over the desolate Campagna. Cologne was the Mecca of northern pilgrimage in the Middle Ages, as it is become a starting-point for latter-day tourists. The lower river had its stories of war and commerce, of battles with the ice crush and the spring inundations. Above Cologne you were in the land of romance, where legend and myth were interwoven with history. Year after year I used to look forward to the little table in the window of the Hotel de Hollande, to the cruet-stand with the amber oil and the queer-coloured vinegar, to the Rhine salmon, the *rehbraten*, the Rhine wine, and the glorious look-out on Byron's exulting and abounding river, as it swirled in turbid flood to the palpitating bridge of boats. The city of



44

45



A Typical Dutch Windmill—Haarlem.



To face p. 54







the Three Kings and the Rhinestream were then in a transition period. The steamers, blowing off their steam, had replaced the dragon of the Drachenfels belching out flames and smoke, and they were a great convenience. But relatively, the river was almost as mediæval as Campbell's Danube, with its untrodden shore. From Bonn to Bingen it was still "The Castled Rhine," as the Red Book used to call it. Whether in dilapidated townships that had once been flourishing free cities, or in the shattered watch-towers of the robber knights, who had been brought to their bearings by Rudolph of Halsberg, mediævalism, ruin, and decay reigned supreme. The Kickleburys had gone up the river not long before, and Tom Hood's comic sketches in pen and pencil, with the long-haired students and spectacled metaphysical dreamers did not seem much of caricatures. Bulwer could lead his pilgrims, fancy free, through a beast world, a fairy world, and the caverns of the gnomes without revolting probabilities. For Germany, like Barbarossa in the Untersberg, was slumbering still, and the demons of commercial enterprise were only straining at their chains. The guide-books

used to point a moral from the exceptional prosperity of Neuwied, where the Moravians had done good strokes of business in an old-fashioned sort of way. There were neither railways nor telegraph posts. The engineers had not blasted tunnels or damaged the scenery by blowing up sunken rocks in the river bed. The Lorelei had still a chance of luring victims to grief, though the ancient mariners she had tempted to shipwreck by her song and her charms were represented by a solitary salmon fisher, automatically making his casts with a drop-net gathered up at the corners. The Bingerloch was still a Charybdis of ill-fame to raftsmen floating the pine-tree stems from the Black Forest. The robber nests, with perhaps three exceptions, were still abandoned to the owls and the bats. A royal prince of the Hohenzollerns and Professor Bethmann-Holweg had set the example of restoring two of them, and Stolzenfels, with the glowing frescoes, which have been fading since, had become a show place since His Prussian Majesty received our Queen there. Any other, with some scrap of rocky vineyard attached, was to be had for a song, if any one cared to buy. I remember the excitement caused by the report that a hair-brained Irishman

had given a few hundred florins for Lahnstein, and proposed to fit it up. A Rhine Castle often figured among the prizes in the Frankfort lotteries, but apparently the winners must have parted with their white elephants on any reasonable terms.

Then, with steamers of moderate horse-power working upstream, there was every temptation to take things easily. A boat put off from each village of any size, took a double-hitch of the rope tossed down, and drew up behind the paddle-box. The boor or the village maiden with her basket came on board; you stepped in, to be landed before some quaint little hostelry, and leaving your portmanteau behind, you slung your knapsack, shouldered your fishing-rod and walked away. If you carried a sketch-book so much the better, and it was simply impossible to hurry. The Rhine is only to be seen to advantage from the battlements winding between the natural bastions on either bank. On the tablelands above were unsuspected villages, with farmsteadings and gabled cottages embowered in orchards, and in each valley was a brook, rich in trout and crayfish—now they have been remorselessly netted and poached—a hermitage or watch-tower, or a shattered abbey.

The Rhine flows still between castled heights

and vine-clad slopes, but it is no longer the same river. It is transmogrified and vulgarised, like the Tyneside of Bewick. To put it bluntly, commercial and industrial prosperity have played the mischief with it from Cologne to Mayence. The atmosphere is thick with sulphurous smoke from brickkilns and limekilns and innumerable tall chimneys. There are fleets of tugs and tramp steamers tying up at bustling wharves, and the men who have been making money, from Bremen to Düsseldorf, have been running up "eligible building sites" to fancy prices. A monstrosity of composite architecture crowns the den of the dragon. Academic Bonn has broken out of its leafy shades in suburban eruptions of cockney villadom. Everywhere, in summer, the piano of the boarding-school Miss, practising her scales, or the Engländerin out on holiday, who is a "paying guest," sounds from the *pension*, still half-shrouded in its walnut or cherry trees.

The centre of all the changes has been at Cologne, and nowhere has there been a more startling transformation. It is the symbol of the regeneration and expansion of Germany. When I first saw the old city it had been slowly reviving for some thirty years, but still to all intents it



IV.] COLOGNE OF THE THREE KINGS 59

was a city of the dead. Victor Hugo had remarked on the busy trade of the river front of the town that was at once a military and commercial centre: what would he say could he have seen it now? There were still traces of the ancient wealth and grandeur, when the elector was the richest of the prelates of the *Pfaffenstrasse*, and when tributes flowed into his shrines from every country in Europe. The old Roman colony had been the Rome of the North, and it was said that Christian piety had raised three hundred and fifty-six church steeples. After the Reformation it became a stronghold of the Catholic reaction, and bigotry had done its worst. First it had banished the Jews, then it proscribed the Protestant weavers; and the Calvinistic States-General, always in trouble with the Archbishop, had retaliated by laying an embargo on the Lower Rhine.

When I saw the city those restrictions had been removed: the mines and ironworks of Westphalia were being developed, and the western railways had brought a great accession of traffic. But it had still much of the gloom of the graveyard and the musty odours of the sacristy. The very names in the German of churches



penitent ruffians under the ban of the Church, vied with others in the richness of their offerings, and doubtless the treasures were even greater than those of À Beckett at Canterbury, for the tomb of the Magi was the more accessible. Nothing shows more forcibly the reverence in which it was held than the fact that it escaped unpillaged down to the Reformation. Even the Lanzknechts and the Schwartzreiters, who, as Scott reminds us in "Quentin Durward," neither feared God nor regarded man, had respect to their oath when they swore by the Three Kings. The Archbishop used his privileges and abused them, but the spoilers came and the priests had to fly. The jewels and gold they saved were pawned or replaced with mosaics and trumpery imitations. Yet still the spot, sacred to superstition, has some halo of its former splendour, and others, like Victor Hugo, see the "Arabian Nights" enshrined in the setting of the Gospels.

The completion of the Gothic masterpiece of the North — completed contrary to all human expectation — is the visible sign of the awakening of Germany. It was the crowning of the new political edifice, when Kaiser William was wearing the crown of Charlemagne. But steam



IV.] RESURRECTION AND THE BOOM 63

had anticipated the triumphs of the war, and the railways with their facility of transport have been the making of modern Cologne. Coming from the west to the great central station, at Cologne as at Rome, you make the circuit of the city. Nowhere, perhaps, do you look out on such labyrinths of lines and sidings, with truck-loads of goods from all parts of the Empire, for the companies and the State took time by the forelock, and secured a broad acreage when land was comparatively cheap. If they had waited they must have treated on very different terms. The city burst its bounds thirty years ago, and began to expand within the girdle of outlying forts. "Rings" as stately as those of Vienna, with façades frescoed like the arcades of Munich, in defiance of a singularly detestable climate, have risen far beyond the former *Amlagen*, leaving spaces between that will surely be filled up. Forty years ago town lots were a drug; then came a sudden boom that reminds one of the South Sea mania or the rapid growth of Chicago. The wide-awake bought dilapidated mansions or neglected dust areas for a song, to sell them twelve months afterwards at *cent. per cent.* Still they kept on rising, and a succession of speculators were enriched. I

went over with a commission to look into the matter when the boom was at its height, with introductions from the traffic manager of the South Eastern, and was taken the round of the city by an official of the railway. He had made a comfortable little pile in the course of a year or two, and told stories of his bargains that made my mouth water. Unfortunately, the time for getting in on the ground floor or even on the upper stories had gone by, and since then, I believe, there has been some inevitable reaction.

As significant as the completion of the cathedral is the growth of the hotel. In the olden time there were three of the first class—the Royal and the Hollande on the river, and the Disch in the town—all three were excellent, but quiet and unobtrusive. Latterly hotels have been springing up like mushrooms around the Domplatz; and the Domhof, which used to be avowedly second-rate, has blossomed into an establishment of the foremost rank. But the rise of the Nord marked the turning point, and from the day of its opening, it filled through the season from *entre-sol* to attic. To my mind it is the most amusing caravanserai in Europe, for it taps the great flood of tourist

traffic, and is the hotel-junction of innumerable diverging routes. There, unless you are a very regular visitor, you drop your individuality to become a number. There you may sit in the courtyard from noon to night, watching the crossing of the pilgrims from all parts of the globe, and certain of picking up acquaintances if you care for that. There you may see piles of the luggage of all countries, from Saratoga trunks, numbered by the dozen, to the Alpine knapsack and the literal "carpet"-bag of the *hausfrau*. The busy *table d'hôte* is illustrative of the perpetual scurry—as the clamour of the porters and the rattle of the omnibuses—though I do not say that is a recommendation. For the *menu* and the cooking leave little to desire, but the meat is hurried up from the slaughter-house and the game from the fields. Everything goes forward at express speed. One evening, dining *à la carte* under the arcade, I praised a *plat* of *rehücke*, which, for a wonder, was admirably kept. My compliment went wide of the mark—and the head-waiter and I were at cross-purposes. "Yes," he said complacently, "we pride ourselves on having everything quite fresh"—as if eggs and roe-venison were precisely on the same footing. The bustle of the Nord would

have been a sacrilegious anachronism, when the sale of *eau de Cologne* and views of the cathedral were the staple industries, and when every *lacquais de place* was in the pay of some member of the prolific family Farina. But now Cologne, with its miles of river front, has a population equalling that of Vienna.

The hanging gardens of the Royal and Bellevue at Bonn were a Pisgah whence you looked out on the Land of Promise. The river went winding towards Rolandseck and Kloster Nomenwerth, and the Seven Hills skirted the horizon. The old university town, with its 20,000 inhabitants more or less, was enlivened by the long-haired students, who listened to the prelections of spectacled professors. It was an aristocratic university, but there were many youths who looked forward to dull domesticity on limited incomes, and they were having their frugal fling while life was young and hopeful. At that time the Bonn *pensions* were cheap, and much resorted to by English ladies, unattached. I remember two old maiden relatives of my own complaining bitterly of their sleep being broken by Bacchanalian chants. You used to see the students at their best and wildest in a *gasthaus* opposite the Stern in



IV. EVENINGS ON THE DRACHENFELS 67

the market-place, but they were always making parties of a summer eve to sup at the restaurant on the summit of the Drachenfels. There was scarcely an accessible picturesque site in the Rhineland that was not consecrated to beer and tobacco. No German maid or matron objected to one or the other. The girls and their chaperons knitted while the *bürschen* smoked and sung. Music there was, as a matter of course, and sometimes an impromptu dance was started on the grass, when any formality of introduction was dispensed with.

I always associate the Drachenfels with *Maitrank*, and my pleasantest associations are with the month of May, when the flies were on and the trout were rising. *Maitrank* comes in with the spring wild flowers; as with burrage in claret-cup, there is an infusion of them in Rhine wine, sweetened and slightly spiced. It is an insidious drink, though not intoxicating, and tells rather more on the liver than the head, like the rack punch Jos Sedley swallowed at Vauxhall. But in those happy days one had no liver.

Talking of girls, and following in the footsteps of "Childe Harold," one could desire no more enchanting guide than Byron. As the magnificent



stanzas on the Drachenfels were quoted in the guide-book, you had them at your finger ends. But if you went there dreaming of the peasant girls with deep blue eyes, you were sadly disenchanted. With substantial waists and solid ankles, and in dresses much more prosaic than coquettish, they had taken to driving donkeys with their brothers, and their voices, broken in perpetual objurgation, were as harsh as the scream of the jay in the adjacent woods. The path winding up from Königswinter to the Dragon's Rock prepared you for similar scenes on the Rigi, and reminded one of Sunday society on Hampstead Heath. In the height of the season the British cockney was in the ascendant; there were comparatively few Americans and not many Germans from afar. The stream set up and down the hill, and it was strange that scarcely a soul diverged to the ruins of Cistercian Heisterbach. The Magpie Brook flowed at the back of the mountain, and there was an unpretentious little hostelry there, where trout and crayfish were to be had in perfection. More than once I have picked up pleasant German acquaintances there, and been seduced into indefinite pipes and talk till we had to pass the flying bridge at Mehlen by moonlight.



IV.] THE RHENISH HINTERLAND 69

“Childe Harold” is the most fascinating of companions, but in the turmoil of his spirits he hurried over the ground. I once walked all the banks from Bonn to Bingen, and it is the only way to appreciate the scenery. For the river flows in a ravine and the tablelands on either side are unknown country. You came on populous villages with picturesque churches, with fountains gushing from the living rock and clear streams running down the slopes of the main street, between orchards and homesteads, and heaps of manure. It is those villages that provide the veal and the pork, the poultry and vegetables you devour in the inns. And always, as I have said, where the scenery verges on the sublime, you walk along a natural battlement, bastioned by projecting cliffs, surmounted by some shattered fortress. It was literally a bird’s-eye view, for example, when you looked down from beyond St Goar, and saw the *Herzog von Nassau* dwarfed in the depths, the *Ruhrort* towing a line of microscopic barges, or the raft with the smoke rising from the cooking fires, and the navigators busy as ants over the great sweeps at the stem and stern.

The Seven Hills themselves, with the freaks of fire and volcanic forces well repaid leisurely ex-

ploration. But on my first ascent of the river, the first glimpse of real peasant life was at Andernach. I was wrong in saying that Neuwied engrossed industrial prosperity, for Andernach was quite a busy port. You looked out from the Gasthaus zur Lilie, which is gone, on piles of mill-stones from the quarries at Nieder Mendig, and on barges loading up with cement. It was a Sabbath afternoon, and the population was in gala dress and evidently in excitement. A *Kirmess* was going forward in a village opposite. Boats were putting off with loads of passengers. The moon was rising when we stepped into one of them, to be ferried across for a groschen or two. Our companions were a friendly monk from the Laacher See, who gave us an invitation to the Abbey, which we accepted, and a couple of peasant girls in laced bodices and brief petticoats, with silver ear-rings which the monk said were heir-looms, and silver skewers, the emblems of virginal purity, stuck through their oily back hair. They were unchaperoned, and among the belles of the evening, and entirely easy in their manners as they were voluble in their talk. The dancing place was a village green, illuminated partly by the moon and partly by oil lamps and tallow candles. On

the benches before the beer house the elders were seated behind pipes with gaudy china bowls and earthen beer tankards. It was odd that in that land of wine, beer seemed to be the popular tippie. From the patriarchs to the hobbledehoyes, the men were all rustics—shepherds, wine-dressers or small landowners. There was no sign of the artisan or of trade unionism, and probably not a man of them was mortgaged to a money-lender. Now the Jews of Fränkfort and Mayence have the farmers and the labourers alike in their grasp from Mayence down to Cologne. Then they were poor but tolerably free from care, and perfectly simple and unsophisticated. The proof of it was that they welcomed the extraordinary advent of two Englishmen, and honoured us as Dr Faust was honoured at the village festivity. They would not hear of our paying for anything—all we could do was to tender our tobacco pouches—and in sheer civility we had to drench ourselves with indifferent beer. When we proposed looking out for partners, they were overwhelmed with our condescension, and the belles of the neighbourhood were peremptorily bidden to break off any previous engagements. It was a delicate situation when a girl was inclined to sulk and her admirer to scowl, but there was no

getting out of it, and, indeed, it was anything but unmixed pleasure hauling the ladies round in the waltz on the rugged turf, and still more up-hill work making conversation. I doubt if we should have a similar welcome now that the Rhinelanders have been demoralised by acquaintance with troops of tourists personally conducted.

On the way to Andernach you pass the Ahr Valley, a favourite resort of mine in many successive years. Then it was charmingly peaceful and sequestered: you might fish for a long spring day and never see a soul in tweeds or broadcloth. Very fair fishing it was, with the swirls and backwaters beneath the hanging alders, and shoaling gravel to land the trout or grayling; and there was a sensuous feeling of enjoyment in the air, for the valley sentimentally reeked of the red wine. On the sunny slopes the terraced banks were portioned out, and the stone facings were numbered in conspicuous letters. I always carried a bottle of the rougher Ahrbleichart with the bread and cheese in the fishing-basket, and waited for the softer Walportzheimer till dinner. Dusty, rather footsore, and somewhat fagged, it was pleasant to walk under the embattled archway of Altenahr, and wend one's way to the homely hostelry, where the

iv.] TROUTING IN THE AHR VALLEY 73

landlady had ever a beaming welcome. She had been busy over her spits and stewpans, but she was not above serving you your own trout, which the Swiss and Austrian innkeepers scorned to do. During dinner you might drink what you pleased. After dinner came the dusty flask of Walportzheimer, cradled, though in a ruder fashion, as at the Voisin or Phillipe's. The wines of the Ahr deserve their reputation, but they never had any notoriety in England, and now Apollinaris water has cut them out altogether. To tell the truth, I never heard of the springs of Apollinaris—perhaps, as Mr Weller remarked of the shepherd, "it was werry little of that beverage" I drank in those days. Sir Percy Anderson, of the Foreign Office, told me afterwards that he narrowly missed making a fortune. He appreciated their qualities, and thought of treating for them; but, like Thackeray's ragged speculator in the ballad, he hadn't the money to pay the stamp. In other words, he had not the money to advertise, and he did not understand company promoting. Now, the Ahr spring has become the fashion. Rosbach was fairly beaten in the race; the natural Seltzer was distanced years ago. Apollinaris is first, and the rest nowhere.

Coblentz was capital headquarters. Not the



least recommendation was the collection of Tauchnitzes', with which you replenished a traveller's library. The Moselle brought down the red soil from the Red Land, and it was pleasant enough to stem the current by Trarbach to Treves, though the steamer started at a most unholy hour, and sometimes came to a dead stoppage on a mud bank. I have been at Treves when torrential falls of rain were washing down landslips, such as Baker describes on the Atbara; but when the water cleared there was excellent trouting in tributary streams that took you up into picturesque country, dotted over with Roman remains, left by the builders of the Black Gate. I am afraid one's steps more frequently tended towards Ems, with its more mundane attractions of the tables, the gardens, and the company. Steps, I say advisedly, for one of the most agreeable walks I know was by Ehrenbreitstein over the hill. Passing the frowning batteries, from the bleak uplands you dropped down on the enchanted valley, scented by flowers and stifled in its breathless surroundings. It was a pleasant break in a long summer day's walk, to stroll in and drop a few florins at the tables. Coutts's correspondent, who had a personal interest in the gambling, had a

iv.] THE NASSAU STATE PRISON 75

royal and extraordinary memory. If you cashed a single ten-pound note one season in passing, he addressed you as an old acquaintance when you came to him with another next year. Having lunched and lightened your pockets of loose change, and scrambled up the opposite ascent, there was a charming walk through the greenwood to the Marksburg. It was a quaint illustration of the survival of feudalism—of latter-day autocracy—in a petty state. Personally, His Serene Highness the Duke of Nassau was as genial a gentleman as you need wish to meet. He used to look in of a Sunday at the Kursaal in his capital, and dine at M. Benazet's excellent table, chatting or flirting with his neighbours, as the case might be. But the castle he had converted into a State prison, with its massive walls and gloomy dungeons, with its garnishing of heavy chains and rusty fetters, might have been envied by the Czar or the Shah. It was all like cracking a walnut with a Nasmyth hammer, for his State captives must have been committed for offences against his forest laws, which were certainly severe—some old woman who had been caught gathering sticks, or a criminal who had taken a shot at a roe by moonlight.



If you went from Coblenz to Ems by road, and did not care to hire a carriage, you might take a seat in the Wiesbaden *eilwagen*, going thither by way of Limburg, Nassau, and Schwabach. A ponderous and primitive vehicle it was, seldom washed except on high days and holidays, with a team hitched up with rope traces, and a postillion in cocked hat, yellow jacket, and jack boots, with a horn slung to his shoulders in tasselled baldrick. The horses, by the way, and very sensibly, had no bearing reins, and carried their heads between their knees in pulling up hill. One incident I remember connected with that *diligence*, and it gave me matter for meditation. Like Colonel Altamont with his seductive Parisian countess, I never knew whether I had been let in or not. I made friends with an affable Hungarian, travelled with him for a few days, and afterwards at Frankfort lent him a few pounds, when Homburg had reduced him to temporary destitution. He pledged his honour to pay up at a certain place and time, and though I never saw or heard of him again, I incline to believe that he was as honourable as agreeable. But there was an odd sequel. Some years afterwards, at Misseri's

IV.] SCOTTISH EXILE IN COBLENTZ 77

Hotel in Constantinople, I was discussing Hungarians with General Klapka—in exile since the Hungarian revolt—and said laughingly that I must have been swindled by a plausible countryman of his. The old warrior took it seriously, pulled out a pocket-book, when cash must have been scarce with him, and really lost his temper because he could not clear the score.

Living was cheap at Coblenz, as everywhere on the Rhine, and English exiles, impecunious as the Scottish laird at Brussels, betook themselves thither, as Royalists had done in the French Revolution. Another old Scotsman, whose estates were administered by trustees, used to come each evening to the Riese for a frugal supper. He had kept harriers and open house, had been a *bon vivant* and a boon companion of Lord Panmure, when the conviviality of Brechin Castle, recorded in Constable's "Memoirs," was notorious. Now, he kept the secret of his shabby lodging—the Rhine folk had no idea of domestic comfort—and if he dined anywhere, it was in some wretched *gasthaus*. His one indulgence was the evening hour at the hotel, and it was more than a doubtful pleasure, for the old gentleman, though homesick to death, came in the hope of meeting with one

of his many acquaintances. Hard up, and with his extravagant instincts still strong in him, *he* never borrowed a shilling. In vain did his friends press their assistance, and he carried Scotch pride and self-respect so far that sipping the light wine that might have passed for vinegar he would not be tempted by their Rauenthaler or Liebfraumilch, and they would willingly have given him Johannisberg or Steinberg. He drew the line at relief from the native tobacco, and over fragrant Havannahs he would sit and talk into the small hours, as he reviewed many a merry recollection with the tears welling up in his eyes.

There were not a few men in those days, plausible fellows with easier consciences, who in more affluent circumstances were shirking their creditors; they used to frequent the steamers for the sake of society, and prey upon a victim when they got the chance. Others were honest enough, but parsimonious to meanness. I remember one dignified and portly gentleman, who was hampered with a wife and a good-looking daughter. He liked his comforts, and practised parsimony as a fine art. With the air and manners of a prince, he was the shabbiest man I ever met. He had made himself excessively agreeable between Andernach and

iv.] PARSIMONY AND POMPOSITITY 79

Coblentz, and we walked together across the quay to the Riese. Bargaining was not the fashion to the north of the Alps, but he set himself at once to beat the landlord down, and got a summary dismissal. Next he tried the Bellevue, with similar result, I presume, for from my window I saw him stalking before the ladies and a porter to the Three Kings next door. These Coblentz monarchs, by the way, are not the sainted Magi of Cologne, but the sons of Charlemagne, who shared his Empire among them, when they set their marks to the Treaty of Verdun. From the Kings, after a time, the porter came away cursing, so my friends had made good their footing. Next day, when I saw Pomposus, he made no secret as to the terms, which were a thaler and a half per head, service included. Even Cook or Gaze, with every reduction for a company, could hardly do so well nowadays. That afternoon I ran up against Pomposus at Stolzenfels, when his daughter's sketch-book fell into the river and the drawings were scattered. A boatman promptly pushed off and rescued them all—to be rewarded with a five-groschen piece. The man stood in speechless amazement, spat on the coin, and pitched it

into the river, then touched his hat to the ladies and turned on his heel. Decidedly he had the best of it, and their blushes made me pity them. For even then the tradition of the English milord, with *calèche* and *fourgon* and a courier scattering gold had not died out. It was not long before that Tom Hood quoted from the sensational serial in a Moselle journal the reward of something like a million sterling offered by a wealthy English widow for the recovery of a missing child.

Flying past by train you see nothing now of the castled Rhine; and the tourist, personally conducted, gives slight thought to the romance. How can he? If fortunately seated, he is admiring the reach where once was the rock of the Lorelei. The echo used to be wakened as matter of business by the whistle of the steamer, which slowed down to let you listen to the reverberations. Now, with an ear-piercing screech, you are shot into the blackness of a tunnel, which burrows beneath the dungeons of the ruin on the heights, associated with a dozen of wild legends and sober historical facts. Simrock, and Hugo, and Dumas, and Bulwer took things leisurely, and the glamour of their genius is flickering still over each nook and

iv.] ROMANCES OF THE RHINE 81

corner. If you only give yourself breathing time, there is matter for any number of day-dreams, and by merely consulting the guide-books recollections come crowding thick upon you. Rheinfels, the grandest ruin on the Rhine, has been besieged and stormed times without number. The shattered walls of Boppard, and Bacharach, and of Oberwesel with the bastioned towers left open on the city side, remind you of the perils of prosperity, when the trader carried his life in his hand, and the Robber Knights took ruthless toll of the traffic. Many an honest citizen left his bones locked in fetters, or was only set free for a ruinous ransom, and when the townsmen had hived honey enough behind their walls, there was always the probability that a robber league would smoke them out. There is Schömberg, the *stamm schloss* of a great race of soldiers of fortune and the home of the seven cruel sisters, whose songs were seductive as those of the syren of the Lorelei; who, like her, had played false with the lovers they ensnared, and were turned into as many rocks and obstructions. There is Welmich, where the soul of Victor Hugo was stirred to its depths, and where the supernatural bell sounds at midnight from the castle well, recalling the sacrilege of the Castellan, who had pillaged

a convent and murdered the abbot, unconfessed. There are the Brother Castles, looking down on Kloster Bornhofen, with the tragical love-romance, which Bulwer immortalised in the "Pilgrims of the Rhine." And at Goarhausen the *spirituel* Dumas was never in happier vein than when he narrated the good Saint's short method with heretics, which recommended itself to the high-handed Charlemagne when he ferried the Emperor across. In mid-stream the Saint, who was the ferryman, questioned the passenger as to his belief. If he owned himself a heathen, he was promptly baptised, and then, to guard against a relapse, was tossed into the river and sent straight to Paradise. There is the Pfalz, where it is said that, according to constitutional practice, the ladies of the Electors Palatine were sent to be confined in exceedingly cramped quarters. It was the standing protest of the secular prince against the encroachments of the three powerful Elector-Archbishops of Cologne, Treves, and Mayence. It is certain that, down to forty years ago, the Duke of Nassau, perpetuating old feudal practices, still taxed the traffic, levying dues on every vessel navigating the Rhine. Less picturesque is the squalid Mause Tower, on its low, sodden island, where avenging

IV.] METTERNICH AND JULES JANIN 83

rats are said to have picked the bones of the wicked bishop, and which was really another custom-house. But it is historically memorable for an escape from drowning, which affected the future of Germany more than the conquests of Charlemagne or the conversions of St Goar. For Bismarck used to tell, with lively expressions of gratitude, how when bathing he was swept away in the current, and only saved himself by the skin of his teeth.

As to the smiling Rheingau, with its sunny slopes and rich vineyards, Dumas has another capital story. Prince Metternich, who, according to Talleyrand, when contrasting him with Mazarin, "*mentait toujours et ne trompait jamais*," had a passion for autographs, and he wrote Jules Janin, "with all the forms of aristocratic courtesy which distinguished him," a request for the famous journalist's signature. Janin's reply was brief and to the point. "Reçu de Monsieur le Prince de Metternich vingt quatre bouteilles de Johannisberg, première qualité." As the journalist had written "*spirituellement*," the Prince executed himself gracefully. Heading all the wine lists of hotels in the Rhineland were Schloss Johannisberg and Steinberg Cabinet, at fabulous figures. In nineteen cases out of twenty that was humbug. Twice



only, as I believe, have I tasted the veritable vintage—once at the Englischer Hof at Mayence, when a bottle was produced on the passage of a diplomatist of the prince's school, who was a critical judge; and again when the wine authentically came from a lot which had been presented to an English premier. But among what are technically branded as second growths, there are others which are good enough for ordinary mortals. In my opinion, the Rauenthaler hardly yields to any, and I know that many Germans agree with me. In the war-time I was travelling from Darmstadt to Metz with a detachment of Hesse-Darmstadt troops. The officers in the saloon carriage were the best of company, and overwhelmed me with civilities I was anxious to repay. The pace of the military train has since reconciled me to South-Eastern stoppages, and luxuries were running short when we drew up for hours at a junction. Talking with the *restaurateur*, I found he had some bottles of Rauenthaler, and I walked off with as many as I could conveniently carry. I shall never forget how a jovial captain of artillery smacked his lips as he rumbled out "Rauenthaler!" before a cork was drawn. With Rauenthaler and song and sausages the night went by, till we looked out



IV.] MAYENCE—A FEDERAL FORTRESS 85

next morning on the Spicheren heights, and what a young lieutenant prophetically remarked was "früher Frankreich." And often, with some of the religious feeling for consecrated soil, have I climbed the slopes from Eltville on the Rhine, when walking through the Rauenthal vineyards to Schwabach, sending my baggage by the lumbering omnibus.

Cologne has scarcely changed more than Mayence. I used always to be sorry for the Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, who, under constraint, handed his town over to be garrisoned by the Confederation. Blue Prussians and White Austrians filled the beer gardens, and the hotel *salons* at supper time resounded with the clash of sabres and the clank of spurs. The citizens grumbled, with good reason, at being tucked up within the strait girdle of the forts. The railway ran in front of the hotels, along the street which skirted the river, making sleep next to impossible, unless you were half-suffocated in a bedroom to the back. When the summer traffic was at its height the narrow platforms in the low-roofed station were a surging crowd of sweating humanity. I chanced to be staying at Mayence when the news came of the Sedan surrender, with a great Rhenish wine mer-



chant, who had played the host to Bismarck. I had sat and sipped and smoked in the historic summer-house in which the Chancellor had smoked and swilled and talked with affected frankness. There he protested that he was against the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, but that Moltke and Von Roon would have their way. Well, when the news came of the surrender, there was a social party in a shabby *gasthaus*, including the Fathers of the City and a couple of Cabinet Ministers from Berlin. The town lit up with an impromptu illumination, and the populace were shouting themselves hoarse in the streets. The select assembly were no less jubilant, and the burgomasters of Mayence were specially joyful. They took it for granted that with Metz and the French fortresses for bulwarks, their own works would be dismantled, and theirs would in verity be a free city. As to that, they have been sadly disillusioned. Mayence is still a place of arms and stronger than ever, though the fortifications have extended and been remodelled. But at least now there is ample breathing space within the *enceinte*. Formerly, when an express train came in, it was a rough-and-tumble scramble to extricate yourself and your luggage, and generally you

iv.] FETTERED BY FORTIFICATIONS 87

stumbled through mud or dust to the hotel, following a porter's truck at a foot's pace. Now you are more likely to be lost in the wilderness of the new station, and the cab-drivers reap the harvest that used to fall to the street porter. For *cuisine*—German *cuisine*—service, and cellars, there were few more comfortable hotels in Germany than the Englischer Hof and the Hollande. But they groaned under the close pressure of the fortifications, and no one was ever tempted to linger long.



CHAPTER V

THE BATHS

THE Rhine is the highway to the German health resorts, which have enriched so many natives, and ruined so many foreigners. The eternal springs may still heal all manner of diseases, but, morality apart, they were far more lively places when the roulette ball went spinning merrily from morn to midnight, and the *rouge et noir* attracted more serious gamblers. Half your fellow-passengers on the Rhine boats either hoped to have a flutter at Wiesbaden or Homburg, or yielded to the insidious seductions of the tables. All classes were drawn into temptations. Sala, perhaps with a touch of personal portraiture, describes the "gay and gallant young Englishman, taking his pleasure abroad," with the wine gourd slung to his stalwart shoulders, indulging in free potations *en route*, and buoyed up with the golden dreams doomed to disappointment. Thackeray sketches Brown the



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To face p. 88

Gastein
(Looking down the Valley)







bagman sitting side by side with Lord Kew, staking respectively their florins and rouleaux. All Lever's heroes are landed sooner or later at a game of which he had no little experience, and he refers incidentally to Electors and Grand Dukes cleared out when Dodd, junior, in a fabulous run of good fortune, was terrorizing the croupiers and breaking the banks. For a croupier suspected of "an unlucky hand" might confidently count on summary dismissal. Those golden days are gone, and the gaiety of cosmopolitans has been eclipsed. The society is outwardly respectable, and even when dissipated is comparatively dull. With the early hours, in spite of lawn tennis or croquet, excursions, dancing and dining, the difficulty is in getting through the tedious day. In the olden time there was no trouble in the matter; there was always one standing resource, for, if you did not play, there was excitement in looking on.

Moreover, the gains of the establishment were so great, that it could afford to be lavish of entertainments and prodigal in advertising. MM. Benazet and Blanc—they were always French speculators who ran the tables—spared no money in making things attractive for probable clients. They retained the most renowned *chefs* for their



restaurants ; they engaged the most eminent *artistes* for operas and concerts ; they never haggled over terms with the conductors of their admirable *Kapellen* ; in the reading-rooms, sumptuously furnished with settees and arm-chairs, you could see all the journals of Europe. Round the Temples of Fortune, where they hatched the golden eggs, were Grecian edifices with frescoed colonnades ; they embellished their parterres with the rarest of bulbs and the most fragrant of flowers, and laid out any number of sequestered walks among shady groves, where lovers might do their wooing to the notes of thrush and nightingale. Mephistopheles had been called into consultation, and it was noteworthy that all the winding garden paths tended insidiously back towards the Kursaal. The sun-blaze was hot, the variegated sun-blinds were drawn down, and from within, dominating the hum of bees on the heliotrope beds, came the chink of coin and the clatter of the rakes. You hesitated, walked in, and were lost, even before the early *table d'hôte*. It was very wrong, and the reform did not come too soon, but we must remember that we owe a debt of gratitude to the gamblers who wantonly and foolishly flung their money away. They bequeathed us the



v.] PRINCES AS SLEEPING PARTNERS 91

buildings and pleasure-grounds, which are now somewhat grudgingly keep up by municipalities, who mulct the abiding *Kurgast* with a head-tax. One is inclined to wish they had endowed them as well, but that was hardly to be expected. Nor can we withhold our sympathy from the needy potentates who used to be sleeping partners in those concerns. The Prince of Hesse-Homburg, with his grim old schloss, set in charming flower-beds, and a mere scrap of a territory, drew a princely revenue from a firm that ranked foremost in the gaming world as the Rothschilds in finance; and the Duke of Nassau and the Grand Duke of Baden added handsomely to ample incomes with less excuse. At least these potentates showed parental consideration for their subjects, and sternly denied them the entry to the tables. The Elector of Hesse-Cassel, living in his German Versailles, was more liberal in his ideas. At his little rural Bath of Wilhelmsbad, a sweet spot secluded in the woodlands, a few miles from Frankfort, I have seen a waggoner pull up his team, and stump in with hob-nailed boots over the polished *parquet*, to lay down his florin at roulette and curse or bless his luck. Germany has been going ahead in commerce, but then it had a practical





monopoly of that branch of industry. I think the only exception, save at Spa, was in republican Switzerland, where the Baths of Saxon tried vainly to tempt strangers to one of the most heaven-forsaken scenes in the sterile *débris* of the Rhone valley. And, by the way, at one time, Mr James Fazy, Member for Geneva, and a leader of radicals in the Swiss Parliament, had started a quiet gaming speculation of his own in a sumptuous mansion on the Quai des Bergues.

The company at the tables was undeniably mixed, but much better order was kept than at Monte Carlo, and the administration was far more liberal. You might see an old lady clutching at her neighbour's stake, but quarrels were rare and soon settled. Rather than stand upon trifles, the head croupier paid twice over, for time was money, and soon the ball was spinning again. And when the table was set thick with pieces piled over each other, or *a cheval* on the numbers, there were frequent occasions for dispute, but the disputants were taught to control themselves. A certain equanimity of manner was *de rigueur*, and nothing can be more false to the facts than the sensational pictures of groups at the gambling tables with features distorted with despair and

tragically melodramatic gestures. You might mark many a look of subdued misery, and sometimes a smiling woman would rip up a glove with a convulsive movement of the finger. But, as a rule, the losers walked away to be sorrowful in secret, though one would not care to follow them into their bed-chambers.

Few were so lost to decency as to blow out their brains in public, and indeed M. Benazet, in particular, set his face severely against suicide. Once I reached Wiesbaden the day after a young Dutch officer had shot himself, falling over the roulette table, and a very horrible scene it must have been. I was told that M. Benazet bustled in to superintend in person the removal of the body to the lavatory, by way of marking his resentment of the ungentlemanly outrage. In half an hour, with creditable promptitude, the damaged table had been replaced by another, and the game was going on as briskly as before. It was said that the Dutchman had only come with some fifty guilders, and perhaps it was but natural that the poorest gamblers should have taken their losses most to heart. It is one thing to be landed in a tight place and another to be absolutely beggared, with a bill at the hotel and no

return ticket. But in Germany, as at Monte Carlo, the Administration for its own sake was always ready to give a clamorous victim a send-off. Of course, losing or winning well is much a matter of temperament and also of custom. There were grand seigneurs who had the grand manner, and seemed to feel that *noblesse* obliged; I remember how nobly Lucien, Prince of Canino, and the old Elector of Hesse-Cassel, used to drop their gold. But the Jews who came over of an evening from Frankfort to Homburg probably held to their money as much as most men, and they habitually played deep, yet nothing could surpass the imperturbability with which they parted with their rouleaux and thousand-franc notes.

It was a queer company, and there were odd incidents. I remember the steward of a Rhine boat—I knew the man well by sight—coming in one evening at Wiesbaden in his professional jacket. He flung his florins about, he freely backed his luck, till he had gathered a heap of money before him. He was a good fellow, he was intoxicated with his good fortune, and pressed loans of florins upon his less fortunate neighbours. Quite a gallery of interested spectators had gathered

behind him. Naturally he would not go till he had lost every florin he had won. Then all the swagger and starch were taken out of him; he tore his hair; he wept piteously, and prayed the men on whom he had pressed his loans to help him in his extremity. There are some with whom the gambling passion lies smouldering, ready to break out with volcanic force at the shortest notice. One evening I went over from Frankfort to Homburg—you passed more than one variegated barrier, indicating a change of frontiers on the short railway run—with a captain in Her Majesty's Black Watch, as steady a lad as one could wish to meet. He had never looked on at high play before, and the spectacle fired his Highland blood like an orgie of Ferintosh. He cut into the game, and the man was transformed; the luck was with him, and in ten minutes he was the very incarnation of greed, clutching at the coins he drew in by handfuls, and piling them in the Highland bonnet which lay between his elbows on the table. Luckily for him, he went back again to be cleaned out next day, and I believe had the good sense to renounce such exciting speculation.

Then there were the *chevaliers de fortune*, whose astounding luck was the terror of the

tables—who tilted, like Don Quixote, at all and sundry, and for a time with brilliant success. The stars of a brief season, they attracted all minor luminaries to their circuits, and there were always many backers of their miraculous runs. Garcia, for more than one season the *bête noir* of all the croupiers, was perhaps the most notable in my time. When he was in highest vein he once challenged the Bank at Homburg to increase its maximum of 600 louis; as he was winning hand over hand the challenge could scarcely in honour be declined, and the Bank was broken. Of course those adventurers always tempted Fortune too far, having squandered like millionaires while the luck lasted. Béranger's couplet might have been the invariable dirge—

“Encore une étoile qui file, qui file,
Qui file et disparaît.”

There were always hawks and vultures hanging about the rooms, watching their opportunity. The stranger, especially if he seemed green and unsophisticated, when gathering a heap of gold or stowing away the crisp new bank-notes, was the cynosure of hungry eyes and the object of many insidious advances. The syren sitting next him would whisper soft advice in his ears; the *ancien*

militaire, looking over his shoulder, would be lost in admiration of his magnificent game. They watched and followed when, flushed with success, he adjourned to the restaurant for refreshment and champagne. But it was the Sisters of Charity, questing for charitable local schemes, who were most frank in their appeals and most persevering in their prayers. They were importunate as their mendicant sisters in Paris, who used to knock at the door of your room in the hotel when you were dressing, and sometimes open it to apologise, withdraw, and wait patiently if they surprised you at your ablutions. I believe those ladies of the Baths, though they competed with impenitent Magdalens, did considerable good by questionable methods, and took heavy toll of the Mammon of Unrighteousness. They knew the people it was futile to approach, and never troubled the Jew money-broker or the professional *routier*. But impromptu winners, warmed with wine, were often freehanded in a flow of high spirits; and, moreover, all gamblers are superstitious, and many would have deemed it unlucky to refuse.

At Wiesbaden and Homburg the springs were highly commended by the faculty for all manner of diseases. At Wiesbaden you were sent to stew

in the tepid chicken broth, and at Homburg the powerful iron waters were beginning to attract hosts of over-eaten diners-out, of the enfeebled, and the dyspeptic. In natural attractions neither could vie with Baden, though Wiesbaden is on the skirts of picturesque Nassau, and Homburg boasts the attractions of the romantic Taunus. So the lessees of the tables, wise in their generation, tempted clients by underselling their rivals. At both the odds in favour of the Banks were scarcely half what they were at Baden. Certainly the system of smaller profits and greater business must have paid, for both Blanc and Benazet, after turning towns of brick or stone into marble, realised immense fortunes. Nevertheless, Baden always more than held its own, which would not have been surprising, considering its incontestable superiority in natural beauties. But its chief patrons were the French, who were seldom much in love with nature, and were content to confine themselves to a drive in the Lichtenthaler Allée or a donkey ride up the hill to the Alte Schloss. The facility of reaching it from Paris and the coquetry of the place, where art had done everything to embellish nature, sufficiently account for that. The odd thing was that the tables drew professionals and amateurs, though



v.] THE SORROWS OF THE GAMBLER 99

the chances in their favour were doubled when they went to the northern Baths. About's M. Le Roi, in his admirable "Trente et Quarante," was a type of the *boulevardiers* who repaired yearly to Baden to lose rather more than they could afford. For the time they would get into terribly tight places, and the straits of Le Roi and his aristocratic friends are not very greatly exaggerated. There was much anxious waiting for letters with remittances, in which the hotel-keepers, uneasy though still polite, took a keen personal interest. I must own to having been once in somewhat similar case myself, though I never dipped but merely trifled on the edge. Travelling by Spa, Wiesbaden, and Homburg, I had left a trail of loose florins behind, and at Baden I was brought to grief by a persistent burst of bad weather. The dripping glades of the forest had no attractions, and one was driven to lounge under cover round the tables where Satan found mischief for idle hands. Finally, one wet day, I was pretty nearly stranded, longing to leave for Switzerland, but tethered by a bill. Apparently, my letter to Lombard Street had miscarried. That night I was preparing to leave the *Kursaal* when a terrific thunder-storm broke and we were all weather-bound.





The hour of midnight was approaching when the croupier announced the last three spins of the ball. On impulse or inspiration I staked one of my last napoleons on the *carré*. I won, and scattered the winnings on the adjacent numbers. I won again, did not tempt Providence a third time, cleared all my small losses, paid my bill, and took the train for Basle next morning. I am glad to say the lesson was not thrown away.

I daresay the Baden waters are good for something, though I never came across any friend who drank them. All the same, the frescoed colonnade was a delightful lounge of a bright summer morning, nor was anything more pleasant after breakfast than to take a book and seat yourself on the banks of the trickling Oos, between the fresh shorn lawn and the fragrant shrubbery. But what I liked about Baden was the double life you could lead. In the forenoon, in thick boots and homespun, you took the fishing-rod and wandered away to the Murgthal, through the lofty colonnades of clean-stemmed pines like the sombre aisles of some gothic cathedral, treading upon soft carpets of fir needles and green bilberry, or crushing your way through the fronds of the bracken. You cast your flies with better or worse luck;

v.] BADEN IN THE WAR-TIME 101

you lunched in the parlour of some homely hostelry; and in late afternoon, if the trout were not on the take, you put up your rod and made a glorious detour through the woodlands, to be landed at last in the Lichenthaler Allée. Pleasantly tired, and with an angler's appetite, you went to dine *à la carte* in the *salon*—there were no late *tables d'hôte* at Baden—with a long-necked flask of Markgräfler at your elbow, an excellent but economical beverage, for it was the wine of the country. Sauntering over to the gardens of the *Conversationhaus* for coffee in frock coat and thin boots, you were in a fairy scene, a sort of sublimated Cremorne, where gay toilettes and bright faces, rouged or *au naturel*, were illuminated by constellations of coloured lamps, and where respectability and rascality were inextricably confounded. The Austrian Jäger band from Rastadt might be there, and there was always Koennemann's *Kapelle*, arranged regardless of expense.

When the gaming was abolished much of the glory had gone with the factitious glitter and glamour, but during the Franco-German War the change was depressing to a degree. Frenchwomen were there, but they were refugees from



Paris or Lorraine or Alsace, with sons or husbands fighting at the front, and for the most part they were in deep mourning. I never saw so many pale faces or red eyes except at Luxemburg during the blockade of Metz. I made an expedition from Baden to Offenburg to have a distant view of the bombardment of Strasburg. I saw it afterwards on much closer terms. We could hear the dull report of the guns, and see the shells shooting up and falling round the towering spire of the Minster. Two elderly Frenchmen were seated on a bench near mine. As each shell exploded they doubled up as if it were aimed at themselves and groaned like Jews at the place of wailing at Jerusalem. How the great hotels paid their way through the evil times is a mystery. They not only held their own, but have enlarged themselves and multiplied; and some, like the *Hollande*, formerly of the second-class, have expanded into palaces of the first order. But Baden, so richly dowered by nature, is the most beautiful of all German Baths, Ischl excepted.

It was an agreeable change to leave those scenes of giddy dissipation to go into temporary retreat at one of the quieter Baths—the serious

health resorts. Sir Francis Head had written of the Brünnen of Nassau, in a little book that had a great vogue in its day. I followed in his track when I first penetrated the interior of the duchy, and was struck by the minute accuracy of his observations. Though the light soil was cultivated and carried light crops, you might have been in the deserts of the Soudan, so far as signs of population went. As the horses dragged the *postwagen* over hill and down dale, for leagues on end you looked in vain for a village, and the land was absolutely unfenced—the fact being that the people were huddled together in villages sheltered in the depths of ravines. You saw the reason when you marked the trees, which had struggled up on the ridges, above the sky-line. They were trimmed square by the cutting gales from the north, which had warped the gnarled stems as with the Alpine *Wettertannen*. You were reminded of the stunted timber in some of those denes near Beachy Head, which are so many funnels for the fierce gusts from the channel, for the *plateau*, breaking into rolling downs and long lines of hillocks, has an elevation of some twelve hundred feet above the Rhine level, which explains the exceptional salubrity of Schwabach. The

Bath itself, with its *Brünnen*, lies, like the surrounding hamlets, in the bottom of a kettle-shaped hollow; I saw nothing of it when I first rumbled down the long single street of the straggling town, which had stretched itself downwards in the course of centuries, before the springs were discovered by the doctors in what is now the fashionable suburb. Few baths, even in Alpine passes, have a shorter season; hotel and lodging-house keepers make their hay while the sun should be tolerably warm, and then they put up their shutters. Schwabach, in depth of winter, blocked up in the snowdrifts, with its inhabitants hibernating like bears, without the *nirvana* of slumber, must be dismal as the mind of man can conceive. Of the many hotels, it was said that only the Post was left open, where the landlord's deputy kept himself warm over the kitchen fire, on the chance of entertaining some adventurous bagman. In early summer there is the belated spring cleaning; façades are whitewashed, balconies are gaily painted and bloom out with hardy flowers like so many hanging gardens. Troops of waiters and bebies of chamber-maids are the harbingers of the summer flight of our guests. In Schwabach of the olden time there was no sort of distraction except an

occasional third-class concert, nor can it be said to be much more lively now; nevertheless, it has exceptional attractions. In my opinion, with its crisp, clear air, its invigorating breezes, and its waters, no one of its rivals can approach it in bracing the enfeebled frame and giving tone to a debilitated system. The first time I made any stay there, I was in rude health enough, but it was a singularly dispiriting season. The rain, it rained steadily every day; the woodlands were dripping and the promenades were drenched. Invalids, with questionable prudence, turned out in waterproofs for their periodical visits to the springs. In sheer despair I took tickets for a course of the baths, and the very first dip gave me cause for congratulation. "Dip" I call it, but, flying in the face of the cautious medical prescriptions, I soaked myself for the full time allotted, before turning out for the next comer. Half floating in the heavy ferruginous water, repulsive to the sight and rather objectionable to the smell, I smoked a cigar and read a novel. Then I emerged from the exhilarating luxury of the *douche*, which stopped the breath and nearly knocked one out of time. I had gone in limp, low, and out of sorts; after being rubbed down

I stepped out like the thoroughbred, who comes from a course of the curry-comb to his gallop on the Downs. It was as if you had been absorbing champagne through every pore, and the result was that I was tempted to turn aside to Schwabach, year after year. As for the application of the waters internally I can say little, for I never gave them a fair chance. When I chanced to pass the *Weinbrunnen* or the *Stahlbrunnen* I swallowed a glass or two, and, in contrast to the warm bath in which you soaked, they were beautifully limpid and sparkling. But I know that Schwabach was the only place where in later years I could get two solid dinners into the day. First, you sat down to the early *table d'hôte*, and the second elaborate meal was called a supper, which was a pleasant way of salving the conscience.

I tried the Hôtel de Nassau, a capital house, in the main street, but afterwards put up with Herr Grebert, at the Allée Saal, which was unexceptionable, but somewhat more of a speculation. It looks out on a wooded bank above the shady alley which gives it its name. In a fine season nothing could be pleasanter than breakfasting at the tables under the trees. When the weather had set in for steady wet, nothing could be more depressing

v.] TEMPTATIONS OF *TABLE D'HÔTE* 107

than the monotonous drip. But the host was a host in himself—he was a gentleman, and familiar with English ways, and had acquaintances who came to him year after year, so you were sure to find yourself in *pays de connaissance*. By the way, Prince Nicholas of Nassau was a *habitué*—he drove a rather scratch four-in-hand; he used to bring his family to the Allée Saal every evening for supper, and I remember how we all were captivated by the beauty and grace of his elder daughter, now the Countess Torby, and wife of the Grand-Duke Michael.

Invalids under the doctor's orders were sorely tempted, as at most of the German baths. Moderation was enjoined, and with appetites stimulated by bracing air and invigorating waters, they sat down every day to a dinner of many courses. Either red wine or white—I forget which—was strictly forbidden. There was no crowd of Germans at the Allée Saal, and I saw nothing of the atrocious gluttony which Head had ascribed to the Teutons. Yet, with time hanging on the hands, meals became the milestones of the dragging day, and no doubt the effect of the waters was neutralised. I confidently recommend lodgings and having the dinner sent in from a restaurant as an alterna-

tive. Once I tried that way of mortifying the flesh, and never desire to try it again. The boy who brought the tray invariably loitered, giving the greases of German cookery time to coagulate. But it landed me on one occasion in a discovery, when I found that veal cutlets could not only be eatable but exquisite. I had fallen back on the resources of the lodging, and the young landlady volunteered a dish of which she might have said, as Dumas' Martigny innkeeper said of the steak from the bear that had swallowed the *chasseur*: "Vous m'en direz nouvelles."

I have alluded to those cutlets because the Schwabach folk think little of their calves, but pride themselves on their pigs. The Schwein General, with his horn, is still a local dignitary as when Head celebrated him in the "Brünnen." Each second householder in the long street has a pigsty in his back premises, whence the brutes are summoned forth at daybreak by "blast of bugle horn." Lanky, lopsided animals they are, and no wonder, considering the amount of severe exercise they take and the miserable rations they starve upon. It was a pitiable sight to see them rooting among stones and stubbles, grubbing for parched roots, and hungrily snapping at beetles. They

v.] THE SWINE AND THE DEER 109

trotted home towards eve, having fattened on the searching winds, and turned eagerly to the scanty refuse in their troughs. Their feeding cost little, and I fancy they fetched a price; but what a contrast they were to the happier hogs of Westphalia and Estremadura, that, banqueting upon showers of acorns and beechnuts, bequeath their hams to Chevet or Morell.

Those lanky swine were scarcely ornamental, but nothing lent such a charm to the woodland walk or the evening drive as the roe-deer. The roe as a rule keep to the recesses of the woods, and are seldom seen save in the gloaming or the early morning. At Schwabach they seem less timid than elsewhere: they come out on the skirts of the hanging coverts and coppices which are scattered everywhere between bare upland and emerald meadow, and they stray with the cattle on the borders of the tiny brooks, teeming with small trout and crayfish. Great bags of the roe used to be made at the ducal *chasses* before the duchy was absorbed in Prussia. Since then they have been thinned, but they are still abundant, and once I went out after them on rather a pot-hunting form of sport. In Germany they "call" the roe, as they call moose or caribou in Canada. I was in

charge of a forester who was an expert at the business. We crouched behind the bushes skirting a little glade, and he imitated the love-bleat of the doe to perfection. We waited and listened: then the cry was raised again. I had heard nothing, not the cracking of a twig or the rustle of a leaf, when a graceful buck made a bound out of the thicket, with his bright hazel eyes gazing round in disappointment. He dropped to a shot behind the shoulder. One always regrets the death of a roe, but that was an exceptionally cold-blooded murder, and I never could be induced to go roe-calling again. Another notable feature of the Schwabach fauna is the great orange-coloured snails. They would seem to have taken their tint from the ferruginous waters, which, Sir Francis Head somewhat apocryphally tells us, leave a mark on the bather's pillow like that of a rusty cannon ball. It is certain those snails affect the water: you see them swarming around the *brünnen*; you meet them crawling along the gutters in the High Street; and after one of the flying showers that are so frequent, they come out to sun themselves on the gravelled paths. If the Germans were as unprejudiced in matters of cookery as the French, I believe they might turn those snails to good

v.] SNAKES AT SCHLANGENBAD 111

account; they look more inviting for soup or *fricassée* than the Burgundian molluscs which are *plats de prédilection* with the *traiteurs* of the Rue Montorgueil, and very likely they would be invaluable in cases of consumption.

If the snails are neglected at Schwabach, the snakes have made the reputation of Schlangenbad. It may be superstition, but they tell you that the vipers which swarm in the surrounding underwood have given the baths their wonderful properties as cosmetiques. Lubricating yourself with snake-slime does not sound seductive, but the fair sex will do much for the complexion. Romantically situated on a precipitous slope, and embosomed in umbrageous shades, I should rank Schlangenbad high among the dull Baths, for there is nothing in the world to do. Once I passed several days there, and have rather agreeable recollections of the place. But it was only because I had one of the brightest of companions in a soldier who had seen service all over the world, and had gone to wash the Schwabach rust out of his system.

For dulness Kissingen ran Schlangenbad hard. I was there thirty years ago, and have never gone back, for the best of reasons. I know not how it may be now, but then we were all put on peni-

tential diet—the invalids and their unfortunate companions alike. Even butter was denied you at the best hotels, and as for the aspect of the country in a watery autumn, the mud baths and the peat baths were the symbols of it. The only permissible luxury was the light bread—like the Viennese, the Kissingen people prided themselves on their rolls, and the correct thing was to do your own marketing at the stalls before the Pump-room, and carry the morning rolls back for breakfast. Perhaps it was the absence of butter, but I found the *specialité* overrated. Wildbad, in the Schwarzwald, sounds romantic, so I was tempted to try it, when told by Sir Richard Quain that I should be all the better for bracing. I fell in love with the valley at first sight, and out of love ere the end of the week. Sir George Dasent, in his “Jest and Earnest,” glorified the melancholy humours of Wildbad. He told how the place prided itself on miraculous cures—how the cripple of the season was the honoured king, unless dethroned by a greater monster of deformity. I cannot say that in my sojourn any conspicuous sufferers were waiting to be healed in the pools of Bethesda, and you had not even the consolation of comparing your own debility with extremes of decrepitude. There was

nothing to suggest the *Cour des miracles* in "Notre Dame de Paris." The society was colourless, like the limpid water, which, unlike the strong iron of Schwabach, had no immediate effects. A new-comer bathed in faith and hope, though there were gouty devotees who declared that a yearly course gave them six months' absolute immunity from torture. But there, too, it was good discipline for defying temptation and mortifying the flesh. The regimen was almost as ascetic as at Kissingen, yet nowhere did you sit down to better dinners. The old *Badhaus* in the market-place looked forbidding enough, and possibly the German *pensionnaires* may have involuntarily practised austerities, but at the Bellevue or thé L'Europe the tables were spread with every delicacy. Moreover, the system was boring to extinction, for after the early bath you were ordered to go back to the blankets, and, above all things, to avoid reading or thought. Beyond the band, which with a crash under your windows awoke you at unholy hours, there were no amusements, and the walking was limited to the pretty but monotonous pastoral valley. A more inviting stream for trout fishing than the Enz I have seldom seen, but I have been so often deluded by appearances on the Continent, that, though dis-



heartened, I was scarcely disappointed. The most persevering of English fly-fishers, and he was a practised hand, never thought it worth while to carry a fishing-basket. There was a special reason for it, for though the trout had a rough time, and were always being evicted from their favourite lurking places, the river-bed was being ploughed up and the banks crumbled down, so that they had invariably food in profusion. For the sensation of the place was going a few miles up stream to the sluice dams, and picnicking down on the long narrow rafts of pine trunks which were poled round the corners to shoot the rapids on their way to the Rhine. Except for damp feet and the chance of subsequent colds the bipeds were safe enough, but once I witnessed a lamentable tragedy. An English girl, the belle of the season, had taken a favourite bull terrier on board. The raft had caught between the bank and a snag, and the dog rushed forward, barking vociferously, to superintend the disentangling. The snag yielded of a sudden, the raft went with a rush, and he was precipitated into the seething turmoil. When he reappeared at the other end he was floating legs upwards, like one of those dogskin bladders with which the herring fishers buoy their nets.

It was dreary work, and stiff as well, scaling the wooded hills that shut in the valley, and threading the endless aisles of fir stems, with no prospect of arriving at a view or an outlet. The pleasantest recollection is of the latest expedition, when we drove to a *jagdschloss* on the ridge between Wurtemberg and Baden, looking down on the friendly and familiar Murgthal, for then the sense of home-sickness for the brightness of Baden became overpowering, and I vowed to change my quarters next day.

The rise of Baths depends upon fashion, and a popular specialist in London or New York can make the immediate future of any place he "discovers." In old times I would not have wished my worst enemy worse luck than being doomed to a cure in one of the Swiss resorts. They were chiefly patronised by untravelled natives, and the accommodation was primitive as the food. The matrons knitted and the men smoked; the girls, who mostly wore spectacles, went botanising with green cases strapped to their square shoulders, and, looking on wistfully at the demonstrative endearments of engaged couples, were sadly at a loss for eligible adorers. For reputation and brilliancy Ragatz was certainly



in the first rank, and I can never forget the dreary week when for my sins I was laid up there with a sprained ankle. Then, it was scarcely more lively than farther Pfeffers in its sombre seclusion, with the darksome approach between the beetling rocks and the brawling torrent. Now Ragatz is a centre of light and gaiety, with many-storied hotels brilliantly lighted and provided with sumptuous *salons*. Baths like Beatenberg and Engelberg, with their romantic surroundings, are pleasant enough headquarters when the weather is fine, but intolerable when the rain is plashing on the window-panes, when the "Alps" or little upland meadows, are saturated, and when each rivulet that bars the way is coming down in unfordable spate.

Davos and the Engadine have been taken up by the doctors, who send consumptive patients to be treated by bracing cold in stirless air. With their summer and winter seasons they have double strings to their bows, and so the transformation scene in that remote Davos valley has been simply marvellous. It may be doubted whether the hospital extension has not been overdone, and experts suggest that the bacillus must be rampant in overheated hotels overcrowded with

7.] EVENINGS IN THE ENGADINE 117

consumptives, not a few of them irretrievably condemned, and only dallying with the inevitable. When the first explorers stumbled into it, they found delightful shelter from the bitter winds which howled down the passes. Now, in some sort, it is become the valley of the shadow of death, and, moreover, invalids when they leave in spring, must make a rush at great risk for more genial latitudes, and gradually brace the enervated frame before they face the inclemency of the early English summer. The atmosphere of Davos is severity carried to stagnation, but there can be no mistake as to the bracing qualities of the Engadine. In my summer trips I had a prejudice against burdening myself with wraps, and only took a light waterproof, and lighter overcoat. My first visit to Pontresina was in a singularly dry summer, and more perfect weather no man need have desired. The days and the long hill walks were rarely enjoyable when you came back to the hotel with ravenous appetite, the edelweiss you had gathered adorning your hat, and all the body glowing with fervent heat. The tantalizing time came when you had bathed and dined. I know nothing more delightfully associated with Swiss

touring than the summer evening, sipping your coffee out of doors and smoking your cigar, with the sense of a day's labour happily accomplished, and the hope of renewing your toils on the morrow. Often have I sat in the portico of the Schweitzerhof at Lucerne, or on the garden esplanade of the Trois Couronnes at Vevay, looking out on the stars reflected in the water and the shadowy outlines of the frowning hills, with the dark slopes that were streaked by silvery moonlight. You could only do the *al fresco* after dinner at the Engadine with the certainty of being chilled to the bone. Then the hotels were few, and the accommodation was primitive. In mine the only place to get warm was a subterraneous billiard-room, thick with the smoke of foul tobacco—a melancholy alternative to the life-giving mountain air you might have enjoyed in furs or a frieze ulster. Thrice in the sunny south I have been in similar case—once when I went to Granada in March, having been unable to persuade any of the English visitors to Malaga to accompany me. They were wise, for they had time to wait. Again, when I had gone to Sicily in May, and having supplied myself with a summer wardrobe, put on a thick suit of well-



11

12



St. Moritz in Winter
(Looking up the Valley towards the Maloja Pass).







worn shooting clothes to wear in crossing the Channel, and to be cast away beyond the Mont Cenis. That year, spring came late in the south, and with unprecedented severity. I wore the suit for a mortal month, and only discarded it, when returning, on the Riviera di Levante. Finally, at the great Vienna Exhibition, I had the honour of being presented by Baron Schmidt to the Emperor in the shabbiest thick greatcoat I have ever been ashamed of. I had counted without the chances of a belated winter at Vienna, and could not well explain to his Imperial Majesty that I had a really respectable light overcoat at the hotel. The moral being that it is wise to be prepared for the worst, even if you have to tip porters for lugging about a bundle of *impedimenta*.

In those days there was a winter in the Engadine, but no winter season. St Moritz was in its infancy; no grand hotel had been built in the gusty gorge of the Maloia, and tobogganing, at peril of bruises and sprains, had not come into fashion. But to have done with the Baths, which would tempt one into Bavaria and Bohemia—in Bohemia, by the way, you get better coffee than anywhere out of older Paris—I may wind

up with a word on Ischl. Ischl is, to my mind, the most delectable of all the Baths, Baden not excepted. When I first saw it some forty years ago, it was in the glories of very early summer, nor had it yet begun to fill before the fashionable season. For as the weather waxed hot, Viennese fashion migrated thither in the suite of the Emperor, who dearly loved the place. No wonder, for it is surrounded by rock, lake, and stream; it is environed by snow-topped mountains, and enveloped in noble forests. Francis Joseph was devoted to the chase, and the deer may be said to have come up to the doors; they prowled about the steadings when the snows set in, taking toll of hay, roots, and corn-ricks. One day I was seated on the bank of the Traun, a couple of miles below the village; the fish were off the feed, and my rod was lying idle. There was a crashing of the boughs, and a stag bounded forth; his tongue was hanging out, and his coat dripping, for he had evidently swam the river. Hard on his traces came a couple of hounds, labouring along with heads down and feathering sterns. No hunter followed, and whether the dogs ran into their deer I know not; but he was evidently hard hit, though probably too far

v.] THE TROUT OF THE TRAUN 121

behind. I asked afterwards, and found the Kaiser had been out that day, and possibly the deer was carrying away an imperial bullet. Ischl had latterly began to be the fashion, and the old-fashioned inns, the Post and the Kreutz, had been superseded by the Kaiserin Elisabeth, christened after the Empress. It was a handsome building, beautifully situated, with the great bay window of the breakfast room overhanging the river. It was burned down some years afterwards, to rise with greater splendour from its ashes. The *cuisine* was as good as at the Archduke Charles in Vienna, but what recommended it to me was that the landlord rented five miles of the Traun. Sir Humphrey Davy has made the lower waters near Gmunden classic. I have fished many of the streams in Europe, but I never caught such trout as those of the Traun. Once I fancied I must have hooked a grilse at least. When, after a hard struggle, I landed my captives, I found a couple of trout, each barely a pound, one on the tail fly, the other on the drop. Moreover, the river abounded in grayling, almost as vigorous as the trout at the first go-off, though they had small stomachs for a fight, and soon knocked under.

Ischl is in smiling scenery with meadow and





Scheveningen Fishing Boat.

To face p. 122







CHAPTER VI

THE TRAVELLERS' LIBRARY

THE solitary tourist must often be at a loss for companionship. I used to like to travel at my own wayward will, and often, when tempted to some eccentric divagation, parted regretfully from pleasant companions. Sometimes we signed odd articles of agreement, and once, for example, at Vienna, I arranged with a delightful chance acquaintance to accompany me on a run down the Danube, on the understanding that we looked in on the way home at Copenhagen to admire Thorwalden's sculptures. But the Solitary has to get through wet days, and dispose of weary evenings; to kill long hours of waiting at railway junctions, and fight the demon of *ennui* in slow trains. Sebastian Yeo remarked very truly in "Westward Ho" that tobacco is the lone man's comfort; but the man cannot be smoking for ever, especially when he has to fall back on

124 THE TRAVELLERS' LIBRARY [CHAP.

Continental cigars. Reading is the alternative, and I can concientiously recommend solitary travel as the school to develop literary tastes. Fortunately for myself, I was always a voracious reader, but abroad I learned to be omnivorous. There is the old proverb that beggars cannot be choosers, and the supply of English books on the Continent was in many countries beggarly. Even Germany, with its innumerable professors and students, was woefully behindhand forty years ago in its own lighter literature. In Belgium the bookshops gravitated between ponderous tomes, the flimsiest French novels of the hour, and still looser publications which would have come within the compass of Lord Campbell's Act. Southey used to swear by Vanbiest, the great bookseller of Brussels; but Southey bought editions of the Fathers and ecclesiastical historians by the hundredweight. If ever a foreigner deserved well of travelling English humanity, it was Baron Tauchnitz. The happy thought which helped his fortunes, and gave him his title of nobility, has made the happiness of the multitude of his fellow-mortals. On the Cathedral Square at Cologne, on the Zeil at Frankfort, in the Graben at Vienna, and, above all, at Baedeker's corner shop in Cob-

lentz, one hurried off to the well-known windows where the latest Tauchnitzes were displayed in a tempting row. Sometimes, through no fault of the Baron's, you were disappointed, and the supply had run short. Sometimes you were making arrangements for a prolonged knapsack trip when your equipment was of the slightest. Then you had to fall back upon standard authors, as in war-travel or Spanish rides you laid in reserves of *würsterben* or meat chocolate. A very good thing it was. You bought a volume of Shakespeare, or "Tom Jones," or "Roderick Random," severely compressed in small type. You had leisure not only to read, but to digest, to appreciate the masterly style of our older classics and the inimitable pictures of old-time manners. Sometimes, to tell the truth, your author might bore you, but there was nothing for it but to tire and to begin again. In a modest way you were imitating Macaulay, who used to take Æschylus and Sir Charles Grandison or *Clarissa Harlowe* for his companions in a post-chaise journey. For myself, when on the rail with a capacious portmanteau, I preferred the practice of Scott, who ballasted his chaise when posting south from Abbotsford with the sensational works of his imitative con-

temporaries. Reading or skimming, when getting over the ground, is very much a matter of moods. Tauchnitz gave ephemeral circulation abroad to many a novel of the day, which in England had fallen almost still-born from the press. His *fluir* was pretty sure, but he was sometimes mistaken, and, moreover, his taste might differ from yours. Often I have rued an indifferent bargain, and the waste of the thalers, when I broke down in the middle of a Tauchnitz in three volumes, after desperate efforts to struggle forward. But, on the other hand, how much value you had for your money in one of those condensed volumes of Fielding or Sterne! Yet not unfrequently in Tauchnitz's choice of translations you were sold. The version you were familiar with in boyhood is sanctified for all time, nor have I ever taken to any English rendering of "Don Quixote," save that of Jarvis. One evening at Coblenz, when exceptionally bored, I was delighted to come upon "Sintram and his Companions." I carried it off in triumph to the Riese, and got ready to revive happy recollections over supper. The translation may have been well done, but it was not the Sintram I had known, and I threw it aside in disgust. Though there may have been something

in the change of tone, as the mind, with the wear and tear of life, passes out of the sentimental and romantic stages. Macaulay, in a letter, tells his favourite niece Margaret that a time will come when she will be disillusioned as to Sintram, and possibly Macaulay was right.

You might differ from Tauchnitz as to his selections of the passing novels, but it was the fault of the retail bookseller if you could not procure all the standard and popular authors—Dickens and Thackeray, Tennyson's "Idylls," Macaulay's "History." No sooner had the latest serial of Lever or Trollope or Charles Reade appeared in *Blackwood* or *The Cornhill*, than it was issued at Leipsic simultaneously with the last instalment. The novels associating themselves with special localities had a permanent sale near the scenes they described. Thus "Davenport Dunn" was in vogue on the Rhine, the scene of Grog Davis' retreat to the village hostelry and the escapades of Annesley Beecher; the "Dodd Family" and "The Daltons" had a long run in Baden; and, in very different vein, "Doctor Antonio" had survived its English popularity among the palms of Bordighera and the olives of Mentone.

Books in the German were too often dear and

dull; in German fiction there had been a reaction against romanticism, and for the most part the best-known novels of North Germany were prolix, prosaic, and intensely Philistine. They were always toil, and often sorrow; that at least was my own feeling, but the traveller who is a man of moods is apt to be a captious critic. What a relief it was to turn to a volume of Heine's "*Reisebilder*," with the sparkle of the light lyrical style, and the exhilarating flights of fancy, whether you were wandering with the Hebrew poet in the woodland glades, or following him through historic cities or over battlefields in the footsteps of his idol, "*der grosse Kaiser*." Where could you find a more fascinating guide than Auerbach—another poet of Heine's race and creed—for rambles through the sylvan wilderness of the Schwartzwald, where your path was seldom crossed, save by the game-keeper, the woodman, or the charcoal-burner? The volumes of his "*Schwartzwälder Dorfgeschichte*" in the knapsack were well worth the extra weight. You saw village life precisely as he painted it; you seemed to identify the very scenery he had described with the love of his ardent local patriotism, and you saw those swarthy charcoal-burners of his bending over their smoulder-

ing fires, or prowling like gnomes of the forest around their huts. Nor has any painter given more vivid pictures of the beauties of these solitudes in summer or winter. It is seldom you get hold of a book that tempts you to burn your bed-curtains, but I remember setting fire to mine at Freiburg, when, in sheer weariness, I fell asleep over a seductive chapter of Auerbach.

I have always wondered, by the way, why hotel-keepers should be so blind, in one respect, to their own interests. They make provision for your material comfort: they send touts to the stations to tempt you into their omnibuses, they spend endless money on advertising. But they seldom bait their traps with books, though, in Switzerland especially, your plans and movements are at the mercy of the weather. The sole exception I have known is in the Schweitzerhof at Lucerne, and I can answer for it personally that the Schweitzerhof system pays. Twice I was caught there, when a rainstorm blew up, after the portmanteau was packed and the bill was settled. Had the time been hanging heavily, I should have been hungry for change. But on one occasion I was in the middle of Mrs Wood's "Roland Yorke"—I don't say Mrs Wood was much of a classic, but she used to interest and amuse

180 THE TRAVELLERS' LIBRARY [CHAP.

me; on another, to my shame be it said, I had first made acquaintance with Mark Twain's "Jumping Frog," and on both I was tempted to put the volumes in my pocket but refrained, preferring to deal honestly by Herr Hauser, and defer my departure. The collection in the drawing-room did not rival the Bodleian, but it served its purpose as well. One of the few houses in England, to my knowledge, which offers a similar lure is the Grand Hotel at Eastbourne. The old Pavilion at Folkestone, and the Lord Warden at Dover, had their libraries too—with good reason, when you were often storm-bound and craning at the Channel passage. But the contents were mainly volumes of *Blackwood* and *Fraser*, *Punch* and the *Illustrated London News*, somewhat troublesome to read in the dim lamplight, and intolerably heavy in the hand. Nevertheless, at the Pavilion, I recollect being immersed in "The Student of Salamanca" in an old *Blackwood*, when a message came from the harbour that the steamer meant to put out. It was touch and go; the arm-chair in the south-west corner was comfortable, though for many years the fourth leg had remained infirm, but I decided to gulp the passage and have done with it. For a couple of hours I never regretted

vi.] TAUCHNITZES AND TEMPTATION 181

anything so much as that abrupt parting from "The Student"; my only fellow-passenger was a Queen's Messenger, and, after the manner of his kind, he had turned into a berth before we had cleared the pier-heads.

Talking of channel passages reminds me that those seductive Tauchnitzes often proved snares of Satan. I do not take any great credit for not pocketing the volumes at Lucerne. Steal is an ugly word, but smuggling has always commended itself to lax consciences. *Ce n'est que le premier pas que coute.* Slipping the volume you were engrossed with into your pocket seemed a matter of course, but it was a sore trial abandoning others, so handy to stow away for a pedestrian tour, and so easy to read by dim candlelight in rural bedrooms. English publishers of more portly and costly editions should have been satisfied by the zeal with which the custom officers came down upon you. They could tell at a glance that you were not likely to have your person padded with Flanders lace, or your pockets stuffed with Parisian jewellery. They even took your word readily about cigars, for no rational man was likely to import tobacco from the Continent. The only places out of Spain where you got cigars of

182 THE TRAVELLERS' LIBRARY [CHAP.

tolerable quality were on the Zeil at Frankfort, and with Vista or Clercbonnet at Geneva. At Madrid you did sometimes come in for a windfall, when choice Havannahs, rather new, were distributed to the troops at some grand field-day to console them for pay in arrear. These boxes were brought to the fashionable club, and you could pick up your Larangas and Henry Clay's for something like twelve shillings the pound. But to revert to the Tauchnitzes, the shrewd official seemed to read you literally like the book. Probably he put the question direct, when in honour you were bound to own up. But possibly the question was gabbled over as matter of form, and in suspicious distrust he proceeded to rummage handbag and portmanteau. He rumbled your clothes, he ruffled your shirts and your temper, and, conscience apart, you come to the conclusion that the game was by no means worth the candle.

Paris was a good starting-point for laying in supplies, and when I used to put up at the old Louvre, while the *Magasins* were steadily encroaching on the hotel accommodation, I was wont to turn into the Palais Royal of a morning, and inspect the windows of the *Librairie* at the west corner of the Galerie d'Orleans. Thirty or forty

years ago there was a rich choice of contemporary light *litterateurs*, or their immediate predecessors, who were all delightfully readable. The romantic school, originated by Victor Hugo and de Vigny in imitation of Scott, was in full swing. Dumas, and that sensuous Socialist, Eugène Sue, were still names to conjure with. In different vein there were Théophile Gautier and Gustave Flaubert, Alphonse Daudet, and Fèydeau, with a host of others whom it would be too tedious to enumerate. New volumes by fascinating writers were always being ticketed as the latest out. Copyright interfered with the sale of Hugo in portable form; in light travelling order you could not lay in the "Miserables" or "Quatre-vingt-treize," in their six or eight bulky folios. "Notre Dame" was, I believe, the only one of his works issued in a cheap edition. But all Dumas and the best of Balzac were to be had at 1 franc, 25 centimes; and when the flimsy volumes had served their immediate purpose, you had no scruples in throwing them away. Scott excepted, no novelist has given me so much enjoyment or instruction as Dumas. In Burgundy, Touraine, Gascogne, and Bearn his romances were so many guide-books, and I own that much of

134 THE TRAVELLERS' LIBRARY [CHAP.

my knowledge of French history in the reigns of the Valois and the Bourbons is founded on them. But the charm of the records of his own travel, the "*Impressions de Voyage*," is that there is at least as much fiction as fact in what professes to be his personal experiences. The great Alexander had unbounded belief in himself—to put it in vulgar phrase, he was the incarnation of cheek. Can anyone seriously credit that the King of the Belgians begged him, in an offhand way, to ask for a luncheon when it suited him; that he planned the most sensational scenes of his most sensational play with the Holy Father in the Vatican; or that he left his warm blankets to go trouting with the boots of a Swiss hotel in the icy water, of a bitter night with sickle and lantern? Wherever you wandered on the Continental touring ground, Dumas had been before you. He had even made the pilgrimage to Mount Sinai in the spirit, for it is certain that he was never there in the flesh. How vividly he dashes in the local colour with broad Venetian brush, and illustrates his graphic sketches of scenery and character with telling touches and humorous instances. His biographical memoir of the bears of Berne is almost better than his story of the dromedary

broken loose at Marseilles, who, luxuriating in the stony wastes of the Camargue, and fancying himself back in his native Soudan, was ultimately ridden down and fetched in by several squadrons of light cavalry. But the souvenirs evoked by his genius are endless, and we shall meet him again in the "Corricolo" and the "Speronare."

A decade or so later came the romances of the Criminal School. More exciting company than Gaboriau one could not have desired; the trouble was that you were nursing the earlier chapters, knowing that sooner or later he would break back in an interlude of bookmaking, and that the mystery would drag and hang till he came to an abrupt finish. In that respect Boisgobey, his pale copyist, improved upon the master. Boisgobey invariably went straight ahead, and I well remember how absorbed I was in the "Crime de l'Opéra," reading on by the glimmer of a candle-lamp to the breaking of the chilly dawn among the olives and almonds of Valence. I owe less gratitude to Zola, although I found him a pretty sure soporific on a night journey.

There was many a tourist who had no taste for books, and for obvious reasons never looked at a foreign newspaper, though he might welcome a



stray sheet of the *Times* or *Galignani*. But the Red Hand-book was indispensable as the purse or the passport; it was the visible and invariable sign of the Briton, who otherwise was unmistakable enough. In the print-shop windows of the Rue Rivoli, the *Anglais pour rire* had always his "Murray" under his arm; he was only supposed to leave it at home when he was represented going to Mabilles or the Château des Fleurs. He came on the stage with it at the farces of the Palais Royal and in the extravaganzas of the *Bouffés*. Before Baedeker entered on a formidable competition, Murray absolutely held the field, and he is indispensable as ever to intelligent travellers imperfectly acquainted with the countries they are going to visit. Murray is still the guide-book to all the other books you ought to study. And it is noteworthy that little in the way of historical or archæological information has been added to the original editions, though repeatedly enlarged and revised. The writers were cultured specialists, enthusiasts, and connoisseurs in art, and often residents for many a year in the countries they knew so well.

An admirable example of the care with which they got up their subjects—it is almost selected



VI.] FALSIFIED PROPHECIES 187

at haphazard—is the sketch of the history of Nuremberg, in the first edition of the handbook to South Germany. It groups in chronological order and picturesque fashion all the personalities and episodes associated with the rise, progress, and decay of the great imperial city, which “stretched its hands through every clime.” On the other hand, it is amusing to note how shrewd prophets failed to predict the future, with its fashions or crazes. In the fourth edition of the Swiss handbook, tourists are warned against the insanity of the ascent of Mont Blanc. Since the passage was penned, the Alpine Club, like Nuremberg, has had its rise, its progress, and, I might add, its decline, for in Switzerland, at least, it has pretty nearly exhausted exploration.



CHAPTER VII

SWISS TOURING

THE barrenness of Switzerland has made its fortune. There are gold mines in the mountains and pearl beds in the lakes. The realms of ice and eternal snow have been worked for all they are worth, and even avalanches and dizzy snow-cornices have been turned to account in tempting adventurous climbers. The recent history of the Cantons has been one of peace, progress, and prosperity, and they have been devoting their profits to developing their country, like the promoters of an International Exhibition, or the speculators who run an Olympia. The changes in the last fifty years have been marvellous, and the old-time tourist would feel lost and mystified were he landed now at Basle or Geneva. Railways traverse the length and breadth of the land; tunnels are being driven through the bowels of the Alps; lifts have been fitted to the hills



The Covered Mill-Bridge over the Reuss—Lucerne.

To face p. 138









CHAP. VII.] TRAIN FOR THE OBERLAND 189

wherever a solitary eminence offers commanding points of view; magnificent hotels have been springing up everywhere; rude shelter huts have been turned into commodious inns; and, of an evening, where some mountain torrent takes a header over the precipice into the abyss, with the electric light and the showers of fireworks, you might fancy yourself at old Cremorne or Vauxhall. The Playground of Europe has been swamped with sightseers, and the sanctuaries where Chaos and Old Night once reigned supreme have been desecrated and vulgarised.

In Switzerland, as in the Rome of the Popes, one remembers the past regretfully. When I knew it first, the railway ran you into Basle or Geneva, and left you there. The only line in the interior was from Zurich to the baths of Baden. Years later I travelled by the first train that started for Thun from Berne; it was of a Sunday, when all the world was making holiday, and the whole country-side was *en fête*. Peasants in gala dress crowded the platforms to stare at the novelty. Shrewd enough to foresee a flush of prosperity, they lavished beer and cigars on guard and engine-driver. When I made acquaintance with Basle there was an admirable *diligence* service, though

worked upon rather primitive lines. It encouraged early rising, involved considerable previous anxiety, and was a serious strain on weak constitutions. For Berne there were two departures daily: one by the direct road, which was comparatively tame; and the other, more circuitous, by the picturesque Münsterthal. There was always a scramble for seats, often booked for the *coupé* by letter many days in advance, though all travellers were promptly forwarded. The great yellow *eilwagen* was followed by a train of supplementary vehicles, dwindling as passengers dropped off. If you missed a place in the *diligence* itself, it was a toss-up how you were accommodated. In any case you were bound to be awake by times, and in dreams and nightmares, you were always listening for the knock at the door. The start was at five A.M.; and, though your portmanteau had been duly despatched on the previous evening, the boots was by your bedside a full hour before. The *coupé* was the favourite place of the luxurious, who took out their sleep when the *diligence* had started, and there, with hermetically-sealed windows, they were little troubled by the dust. But the great thing for the admirer of the sublime and beautiful was to

VII.] LONG DAYS IN THE *DILIGENCE* 141

secure a place in the *banquette*, which was shared with the intelligent conductor, though in a sultry summer, from start to finish, you travelled in sun-glare and powdery clouds. You had warning of what awaited you when the ponderous vehicle was wheeled out of the yard into the street. Unlike the English mails, the Wonders or the Quick-silvers, it was seldom washed, save of a Saturday night, and from the splinter bar to the tarpaulin which covered a mountain of luggage, it was thickly encrusted with dust. Yet scrupulous care was paid to essentials. The conductor was responsible for inspection of the springs; the axles were examined and regularly oiled, for the descents were steep and the turnings sharp. That the descents were precipitous you might confidently surmise from the powerful brake and the ponderous *sabot*. The horses were stout and the rope traces strong, and easily to be spliced in case of an accident; but the teams and the whole turn-out were as unlike as possible to anything that had started from the Bull and Mouth or the White Horse Cellar. With the perpetual ups and downs, the pace was moderate, and, with the conductor setting the example, you had many an opportunity of stretching your legs. Satiated with romantic scenes,

hungry and thirsty, drowsy and cramped, you woke up to new life with the rattle of the wheels when they roused the echoes of the stone arcades of Berne. It would be interesting to know how many tourists now take the trouble or go to the expense of chartering a carriage through the windings of the Münsterthal; how many care to break the journey to look in at the workshops of the watchmakers of Bienne, or diverge on a sentimental pilgrimage to the island-refuge of Rousseau. Yet the environs of the pretty little town of Bienne are full of interest, and I used to know them well, for more than once I have made Bienne my headquarters for fishing trips.

The number, or rather the paucity, of tourists at that time may be roughly gauged by the *diligence* accommodation and the hotels. At Basle the Trois Rois, with its balconies hanging over the rush of the green river, where Vavasour, in Trollope's novel, made the proposal to his cousin, almost monopolised the English. The names of the others—the Cigogne, the Krone, the Sauvage, and the Kopf—were suggestive of foreign patronage, and the note appended to them in the guide-book was "not very clean." Now the Trois Rois has



The Clock Tower—Bern.



The Clock Tower—Berne.

To face p. 142





been in some measure eclipsed by the Euler, the Suisse, and other modernised establishments, more convenient to the central station; and, to tell the truth, the furnishing of the Three Kings is somewhat out at elbows. At Berne there were two excellent old-fashioned hostelries in the main street, with the signs of the Crown and the Falcon. I used to put up at the Falcon, and it was significant of the times that the friendly host always recognised and greeted me as an old acquaintance. He remembered my tastes and studied them. Once I was greatly touched by his paternal and disinterested solicitude. He laid a hand on my shoulder when leaving, and told me he had been thinking I was wasting my life and what he was pleased to call my talents. I should be a happier man if I renounced roving, and went in for marriage.

He was a genuine type of the old Swiss landlord, who, though he looked sharply enough after the main chance, was more of the courteous gentleman than the profit-seeking host. Those innkeepers were often farmers or landowners, and by saving and judicious investments amassed considerable fortunes. But few of them were so fortunate as the speculative landlord of Klosterli,

porters were in request, and in the early afternoon when the sun grew hot, there was a group gathered before the one little inn on the Wengern Alp to watch the snow slides from the slopes of the Jüngfrau. A rough track led up past the Staubach to the humble inn at Mürren, which had not then been discovered by the University dons and headmasters, who have since taken to flight before the incursions of the barbarians.

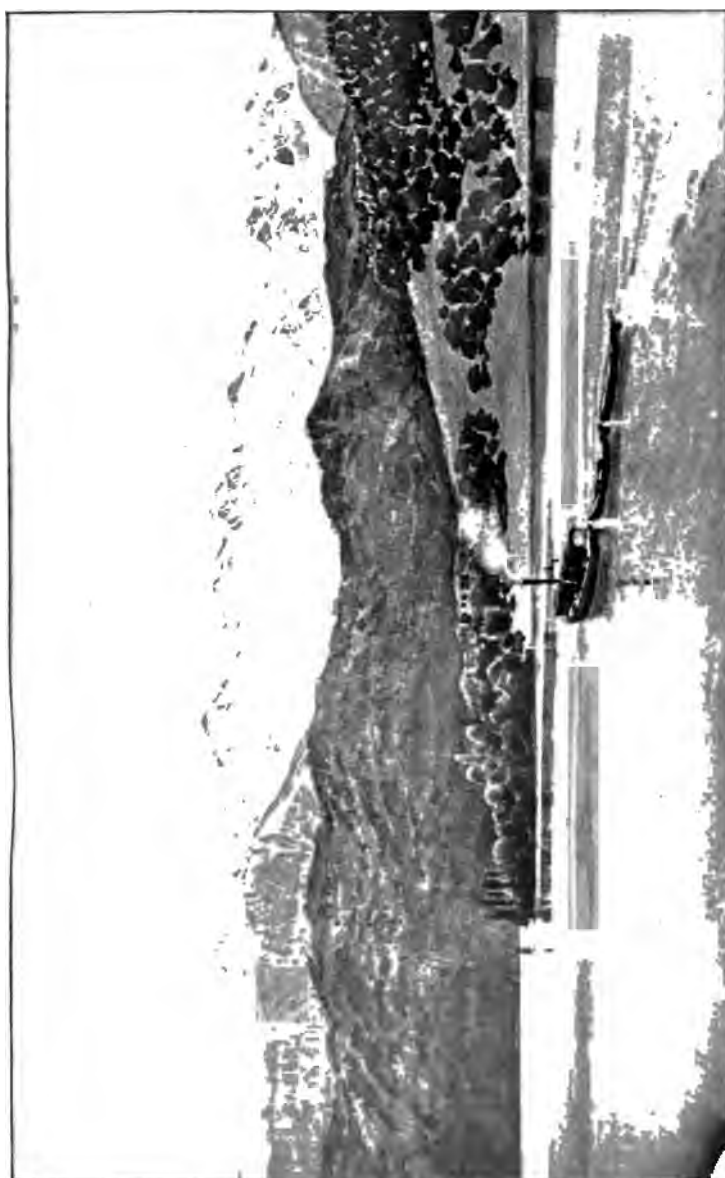
At Lucerne the Schweitzerhof was supreme. Only a few years before it had shifted from the town to the border of the lake. Since then it has gone on flourishing, throwing out *dependances* on either side. Some of my pleasantest Swiss recollections associate themselves with the informal club gatherings in its portico, where, in friendly chat after the late *table d'hôte* over coffee and cigars, we have been comparing notes over the day's excursions and expeditions, or dreamily contemplating the starry heavens reflected in the shimmering water. Now the Schweitzerhof is only one of the best among many rivals. I was one of the first to sleep in the Englischerhof, when we could not find quarters next door; and when we growled over excessive charges, we were reminded that we were carrying the new establishment on our unsupported





View of the Lake and Mountains from the Schweizerhof—Lucerne.

To face p. 146





VII.] CHANGED TIMES AT LUCERNE 147

shoulders. Then came the National, which made a speciality of the *cuisine*, and connoisseurs still swear by the excellence of its *chefs*. But forty years ago the only serious competitor of the Schweitzerhof was the Balances, much affected by Germans of all ranks. I have seen the bills, and they were a long drop from the reasonable prices of the Schweitzerhof; but then at the best of the numerous *pensions* you could be boarded for about six francs a day.

In those days, when you had secured a front room at the Schweitzerhof you were in clover, and slow to move on. Now you are in the very vortex of the tornado of bustle, and can sympathise with the unceasing strain on harassed waiters and distracted boots. At cockcrow the steamers moored below the windows begin to shriek and the omnibuses to rattle. The growth of good business and the passenger traffic must be gratifying to the citizens; but now the lake banks at Lucerne as elsewhere are no places for the quiet man who likes to take things leisurely. In the old times, when the early boats had been sent off, he might turn over and go to sleep again. Now he is inclined to curse the Rigi and Pilate, which draw excursionists as the Shreckhorn attracts the



thunderstorms. The splashing of paddles and the screech of the steam-pipes is incessant. With a couple of railways to the summit, the ascent of the Rigi is less fatiguing than that of the Monument. From the Kulm to the lake levels it is populous with inns, *pensions*, hydropathic establishments, and their dependencies. The Murray for 1838 describes the Kulm Haus as a barrack, with fifty beds and fair accommodation. Twenty years afterwards it was enlarged, and a second establishment was started on the Staffel to receive the overflow. For unless you made sure of a bed beforehand—one of the first Swiss telegraphs was carried up the mountain—if you did not consent to bivouac on the floor or a table, it was certain you would be turned from the door. All the provisions were taken up on ponies or on porters; the fare, though simple, was sufficient, and the charges were extraordinarily low: a franc and a half for a bed—there were several in each small chamber—and three francs for the supper. The unsophisticated hosts had not learned to regulate supply on vociferous demand. Then, in settled weather, on the winding paths from Weggis or Arth, were long-drawn caravans set earnestly on the pilgrimage, with an agreeable blending of the humorous and

picturesque. Troops of ponies—what has become of them now?—scores of *chaises-à-porteurs*, hordes of porters and hill-guides, were anxiously expecting the arrival of the boats. Beset by beggars and girls offering bouquets of Alpine roses and gentianellas, the race for the summit set in, with beds for the prizes. Stalwart Englishmen unattached strode forward in advance, and Frenchmen given over to the guide by their stirrup would follow on horseback in dust overcoats and patent leather boots. No sooner was supper cleared away than the floor was covered with bedding, and the crowd betook themselves to troubled slumbers, till roused by the blast of the “horn of Uri” announcing the sunrise. All over the inn warnings were placarded against using the blankets as wrappers against the chill, and the suggestive rule was more honoured in the breach than the observance, for the fine was a very modest one.

I do not know that much is lost by not risking a night on the Rigi, for the odds were always in favour of disappointment. Even if the weather were fair, the mists might linger and you missed the glories of the mountain view. With the rapid despatch by the ærial rail, you can bide your time and choose your weather, and the Rigi is most

perfectly enjoyable of a bright afternoon. There is no shivering in blankets and dripping fog on an empty stomach. The mountain panorama is more clearly visible; the map of the plains and valleys unrolls itself beneath your feet, losing itself vaguely in the distant horizon, and each passing fleck of the azure skies is mirrored in the lakes. I know nothing more effective, from the artistic point of view, than the reflection of a floating cloud on the Lake of Zug; the fleecy vapour falls in shadows of the deepest black; it looks exactly as if you had been dropping ink on pellucid water.

Rousseau said of Geneva, "*Mon lac est le premier*," and for a lengthened sojourn I agree with him—with Byron, Shelley, and Rogers. Lucerne is wilder, but there is a winning charm in Lake Lemman, with its wooded and vine-clad shores and magnificent mountain backgrounds. Forty years ago the town of Geneva was never overcrowded. The Hôtel des Bergues had just been built; the older houses were the Couronne and the Ecu of many stories. The Métropole, with its magnificent proportions, inaugurated the new era. There was not much to tempt the tourist to loiter at Geneva, when he had not access to its cultured society, except the shops of the watchmakers and

jewellers, where he was likely to drop more money than he could afford. The elegant little watches were cheap, and the jewellery was in exquisite taste. Beaute, among some fifty others, though he did not go back to prehistoric models, was almost as finished a master of his art as Castellani of Rome. Then the duties for travellers going home by France were not so heavy or so severely exacted as when Dumas went on his travels. He tells in one of his best stories how the Beaute of the day, renowned for his skill in smuggling, got the better of the Count de Saint-Cricq, Louis Phillipe's director of customs, who was travelling as a detective. The Count bought 80,000 francs worth of jewellery, on condition it was delivered free of duty in Paris. When he went up to his bed-room on arriving, he found his purchases on the dressing-table. Beaute had bribed his valet to stow them away among his luggage.

Montreux had not then come into fashion with the doctors: there was no hideous scar cut for a railway in the face of the picturesque heights; but Ouchy and Vevay were delightful resting-places, especially if you came with introductions. I never patronised the Hôtel Gibbon at Lausanne, notwithstanding its commanding prospect and the classical

associations of the summer house in its garden. But I have passed many a pleasant week at Ouchy, though the only inn in those early days was the humble Anchor facing the little *quai*, with a wine shop and spirit bar under the flight of steps leading to the ground floor. Byron had been there before me and there he had written one of the cantos of "Childe Harold." It was rather a shock to my conservatism when I arrived one summer evening afterwards to find that the Beau Rivage had arisen in its splendour, and that the opening banquet was coming off that night. But making the best of things, I sent my card to one of the directors, and was invited to the festivities. Afterwards I abandoned my old love of the Anchor for the *salons* and gardens of the new establishment. The Beau Rivage was partly run under English auspices, and I knew various members of the Council, for at that time Ouchy was a centre of the pleasantest Anglo-Swiss society on the lake. Swiss and English had intermarried, and families were still to the fore who are mentioned in Dickens' letters, when he rented a villa half-way up the hill. There was M. de Cerjat, who could handle a four-in-hand as well as any English coachman; he had a nephew in the English navy, and was half an Englishman

vii.] CANTON VAUD AND RICH ALIENS 158

himself; there was Baron de Blonay, who had married an Englishwoman; and old M. Haldimand, whose charming cottage once stood in a paradise of flowers beyond the grounds of the Beau Rivage, with Bairds and Goffs and many another. Since then all the seniors have died, and the legislators of Canton Vaud have done their best to drive away British residents. Now English lodgers in Lausanne may be counted by the hundred, but the settled proprietors of landed estate have been taxed beyond all endurance. I believe the Canton actually enacted that they should be taxed there on all the property, real or personal, they possessed elsewhere. I know that when a friend had arranged to sell his beautiful place to a prince of the Orleans family, the bargain was broken off at the eleventh hour, when the prince realised the burdens to which he would be subjected.

Spring after spring I found a home at the Trois Couronnes of Vevay. Landlord after landlord—Schmidts and Schneiders—made a fortune out of that house, and they deserved it. Invalids who did not care to face the Simplon or the sea voyage to South Italy passed the winter at Vevay; families coming back from Italy, year after year, waited there till spring winds in England should

have blown over. You could hardly help being sociable, for the sunny strip of garden between lake and hotel was of limited dimensions. Steps led down from the garden to the water, where boats, like Venetian gondolas, lay in readiness, tempting you to moonlight promenades. Before you the Savoy Alps skirted the horizon — the Dent de Midi and the oddly-named Pain de Sucre the most conspicuous. In the daytime we used to go out sailing and fishing—the former a sure resource, the latter eminently speculative, though sometimes with trolling one caught good trout. Often I sculled across to St Gingolph, and once was very nearly brought to shipwreck when a squall blew down the Rhone valley from the Oberland, and lashed the lake into convulsions. Nowadays the amenity of the Trois Couronnes has been ruined by running an esplanade beneath the old terraced garden, and the newer Grand Hotel, though airy and with a free outlook all around, has not the *dolce far niente* charm of the Couronne as it used to be.

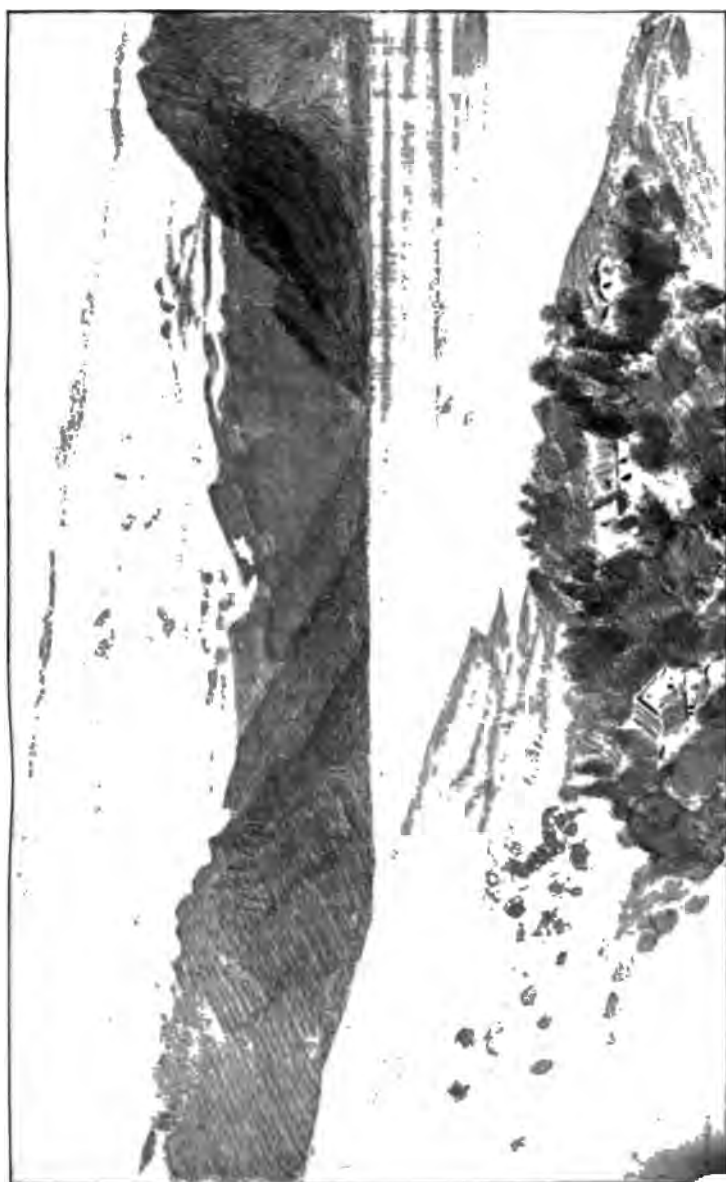
To Byron's sojourn at Vevay we owe the "Prisoner of Chillon," but he found it dull. Quiet it is, of course, and all it has to show in the way of historical interest is the house and grave of





The Lake of Geneva from Lausanne.

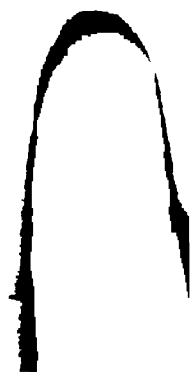
To face p. 154





Ludlow the Regicide, whose grey hairs went down to the grave in peace, for he escaped the assassins who executed vengeance on a fellow-fugitive. Tourists who go there in autumn never see it at its best, for then the slopes are scorched and the roads are deep in chalk dust. But in late spring nothing in Switzerland surpasses it. The air is scented with the fragrance of warm walnut leaves; the hanging vineyards are festooned with the tender green of the tendrils; the sheltered nooks of meadows are so many blooming parterres of wild flowers; and when you climb above the walnuts through the belt of the firs, fresh breezes from the mountains are always about. And simple luxuries are still marvellously cheap, though they have risen in price of late years. On one visit I lived with the mother of a travelling companion in a comfortable *pension* for four francs a day. We had the white country wine *à discretion*—a growth like the Yvonne—and very good it was. From the tobacco factory, which stood hard by the church, we carried off boxes of Cabanas at ten francs; if they were not quite up to the mark of those of Clercbonnet of Geneva, they were light and harmless, for you could smoke any number with impunity.

The direct route to Chamouny was from Geneva by Salanches, and the *diligences* were invariably overcrowded. I generally went from Vevay by way of the Rhone valley, stopping short of Martigny, with its midges, mosquitoes, and indifferent inns; striking off at Vernex, cutting into the Tête Noire, and carrying my own knapsack. The first bit of clambering is singularly romantic, and I once had a narrow escape there. A shower of small stones came down the hill, and when I was dodging them a sharp piece of rock, with the force of a cannon ball, knocked off my hat and grazed my temple. A scrambling troop of goats caused the bombardment. Of course, such stone-shots in the *couloirs* of the high Alps are common enough. That reminds me of another incident, rather more rare in Switzerland, which might have proved serious to our party. Four of us had foregathered at Kandersteg, and were going over the Gemmi. But the rains descended, and we tarried, hoping that the weather would clear. We were sitting over a rubber in the *salle-à-manger*, when the wooden structure was shaken bodily, as if grasped by a giant's hand. The crockery came down in a smash. Promptly we all hopped out of the window, realising that it was the violent





To face p. 156

Sion—Rhône Valley.







VII.] EARTHQUAKE AT LEUKERBAD 157

shock of an earthquake. The weather did clear, and we went on. As we scaled the dreary steep to the lonely inn of Schwarenbach, apex of which Dumas has one of his most ludicrous fancies, the ground began to tremble and the hills to shake. It was not a mere scattering of grape-shot this time, but a sustained cannonade of heavy rocks, and much relieved we felt when we stood safe on a solid ridge. When we were supping with the company of invalids who were steaming themselves at Leukerbad, there was another sensational scene. The great wooden hotel was shaken like the little inn of Kandersteg; nervous ladies went into hysterics, and were shamefully abandoned by able-bodied relations who made simultaneous rushes for the windows and doors. It was with difficulty some of them were persuaded not to camp out in the cold, preferring the chances of pleurisy or pneumonia to such a catastrophe as that of Lisbon.

At Chamouny the hotels were the *Londres* and *Angleterre* and the *Union*; but the annual autumnal rush was outstripping the accommodation, and you were often *quarteré* in private quarters in the *villages*. The *saunas* were open to their *privileges* and *the* *saunas* *of* *the* *saunas*.

though friendly in the extreme. The guides were a close corporation, governed by strict rules, which were all arranged for their profit. Somewhat later these rules were relaxed in favour of practised Alpine men. In the olden time you might covet the services of some distinguished guide, a scion of one of the famous families, like the Balmats or the Tairraz, who could charm away the weariness of an evening among the snows by tales of the feats of himself and his father. But they came upon duty in turn, according to the order of application. The Syndicate saw to it that they were uncommonly well paid, and the ascent of the "Monarch of Mountains"—Blanc, as the Americans familiarly called him—was costly, and supposed to be dangerous enough to deter all but the daring. Four guides at 100 francs each, were *de rigueur*, with attendant porters weighted with wraps and provisions. No one ever made a better speculation of the ascent than Albert Smith, who was deified at Chamouny as one of its chief benefactors. And his pluck deserved the profits he made in the Egyptian Hall, for no short-winded tourist ever tried the climb when more woefully out of condition; and when he broke down below the summit, he was literally dragged to the top. But in those days any adven-

VII.] THE REVELATION AT ZERMATT 159

turer was lionised ; while making his preparations he was watched by telescopes through each stage of his progress, and had a royal reception when he came down in triumph. Visitors and village folk turned out to welcome him ; there was a salvo from the battery of brass cannon in the garden of the Londres, and showers of fireworks preceded a festal supper, where his health was enthusiastically toasted. I forget whether those charges went down in the bill, or whether the landlord paid, by way of advertisement.

De Saussure's memorable ascent had drawn attention to Chamouny, and it grew gradually into greater and greater popularity. Moreover, it was comparatively accessible from Geneva, and the mighty mass of Mont Blanc was a magnet which drew irresistibly. Zermatt is a more remarkable example of the spasmodic advances of Switzerland by leaps and capricious bounds. There the railway has actually anticipated the road, landing you in a dazzling blaze of electric lights. Engelhardt may be said to have discovered it for tourists in 1835, but they had to beg quarters from the Curé till years afterwards an enterprising doctor started a modest *auberge*. Then the Hotel de Mont Cervan was opened in 1852, and two years later





Seiler set up the Monte Rosa. It was about that time I first walked up the valley, sleeping at Wisp and breakfasting at Stalden. It was a dismal day, and the mists were lying low upon the hillsides, when of a sudden the sun broke out, and showed what seemed the peak of the Matterhorn in all its glory. I was ineffably impressed. The fogs rolled down again, to be finally dissipated, and then I saw it was not the Matterhorn I had been admiring, but merely one of its outstanding spurs. The consequence was an indelible memory of the grandeur of the mountain, and I only marvelled why the Zermatt Valley had not been more seriously *exploité* before. I think it was the second week in June, but we were the first arrivals at the Monte Rosa. Seiler had a fatted lamb killed for us, and we supped lightly on the inwards. Since then each pass in the neighbourhood has been industriously worked; and each formidable peak has been stripped of its exaggerated terrors, and there is no more favourite resort than Seiler's inn among the glaciers. For many years an old friend—Hardy, of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, a famous mountaineer in retreat—regularly did the honours of the inn, and was known as the King of the Riffel. When he had given up mountaineering, he never travelled





The Matterhorn from the Riffel.

To face p. 160





vii.] THE KING OF THE RIFFEL 161

without his ice-axe in its leather sheath—the badge of his guild, and the symbol of his achievements. He had been rather spoiled by the adoration of admiring subjects where he was familiarly known, for his rough geniality won all hearts. Once I tempted him to regions in the Southern Cantons where they knew him not, and to the Oberland, where they had almost forgotten him, and it seriously ruffled his self-respect when he found himself treated as an ordinary tourist.

With tunnelling and express trains, the romance of the Passes will soon be a thing of the past. There was never a carriage-way over the St Bernard, and for that reason it is perhaps the most romantic of all. There the chivalry of charity takes the most heroic form. Charlemagne, Francis the First, and Napoleon have successively crossed it, and there is no finer passage in Roger's "Italy" than that which describes the march of Hannibal. But the daring of kings and conquerors has been far surpassed by the heroic endurance of obscure monks, who resigned themselves to daily perils and to deaths from lingering disease, in sure and certain hope of rewards in the future. The cost of running the hospice is enormous; the provisions are brought up from St Pierre or Aosta; the fuel has to be

fetched from the Val de Ferret; and, at the elevation of eight thousand feet, the fires are slow to burn and the kettle to boil. The house is kept open to all-comers, and even in winter, when the snow lies thirty feet deep, there is daily traffic over the Pass. Never was their hospitality more heavily taxed than when they entertained Napoleon and his army, and though the great conqueror was free-handed enough, it landed them in temporary insolvency. Depending chiefly on the generosity of their guests, it was embarrassing to loiter tactfully behind the guide who showed the chapel and drop your contribution into the money-box. For once you could have wished to parade your liberality, and let your left hand know what your right hand was doing. I know I had that feeling very strongly, for I once sponged upon the good fathers for three nights. The days passed so pleasantly that I could not tear myself away. The *clavandier* or bursar, who did the honours of the refectory, was a man of the world, and the most agreeable of companions. He reminded you of one of those monks mentioned by Eothen, of marvellous social gifts, relegated for ambition or some other fault to an obscure convent in Syria. When he handed me over to one of the convent

vii.] THE DOGS OF ST BERNARD 168

servants for the ascent of Mont Velan, the day might, indeed, have been more agreeably passed, for another tourist who accompanied me lost head and breath, and we had to drag him bodily good part of the way back. When put to bed he declared he was dying; but the *clavandier* turned doctor, and gave him strong brandy and water, instead of spiritual consolation. There was nothing to complain of in the convent fare, but the cellar was far from satisfactory. The cellars were deep in the ground, to prevent the wine freezing in winter; but even in summer, on these heights, the half-iced red vintage of the Valais, with its essential earthy flavour, was far from an exhilarating tippie. It went down more pleasantly when warmed with spice and sugar, as I sat over the fire of logs with the bursar late into the nights, and listened to his thrilling stories of storm and stress, peril and rescue. It seemed strange that the convent should have been repeatedly burned out, considering the solidity of the masonry in walls and corridors. He said that the sagacity of the dogs had been overrated, to the disparagement of their masters and the servants; though they were invaluable guides in blinding blizzards, when the traveller, shrouded in the snow, was settling into

the death-sleep. When I was on my first visit there had been a run of misadventures. I believe there were some young dogs "at walk" about Martigny, but in the convent there was only a single bitch with one weakly puppy, and they were lying on the chamois-skin rugs at our feet. So I was glad to see, when I came back from Italy across the Simplon, a magnificent pair, male and female, sunning themselves on the steps of the subsidiary hospice below the crest. Now the best are to be found in England, and there is no fear of the breed dying out, since Albert Smith and other Englishmen have brought the race into fashion with us. The St Bernard draws at shows, like the hunter or shire horse, and fetches prices almost fabulous.

My companion found going up Mont Velan a stiff climb, but I shall never forget my walk from the hospice down to Aosta. It was passing from a refrigerating chamber into a fiery furnace. The blaze of the mid-day sun beat down from the limestone cliffs, and I crawled into Aosta foot-sore, baked, and shrivelled. It was like Christian going down from the entertainment of the House Beautiful through the Valley of Humiliation into the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The first thing I did was to get into a bath, and call for a

couple of bottles of Asti spumante. After uncorking the second I felt equal to a plate of figs, and in their bursting lusciousness they contrasted suggestively with the nuts we had been cracking at the hospice the night before.

Napoleon, the great road-maker, crossed the St Bernard, but for sound strategical reasons he did not make a road there. Over the Simplon, as over the Cenis, he threw what Rogers, who travelled *en amateur*, calls "paths of pleasure, glittering in many a broken link." The works he left should have been as lasting as those of the conquering Romans who preceded him, and it is the misfortune of tourists of our time that they should have so soon been superseded by steam. What with avalanches and floods, they always needed a deal of repair, and the passage in early spring was sometimes somewhat sensational. It was significant that on the French side of the Cenis—not the most formidable of the Passes—there were no fewer than twenty-three refuges, and elsewhere they were even more numerous. Everywhere, and far above the highest inn, a hospice, kept by self-sacrificing monks, nearly crowned the *col*, seeking indifferent shelter in some adjacent hollow. From the eastern slope of the Cenis you might be shot down in

sledges, steered by experts—a wild form of tobogganing, and not without its perils. With the spring *diligences* over the Southern Alps there was variety of excitement, though little real danger. Here and there the *cantonniers* were at work on some recent landslip, leaving barely enough road to give the *diligence* passage. Sometimes the space left was on the side of the abyss, and then it was awkward; but if the weather were anyway tolerable, the passengers were on foot when on the ascent, and cutting off the corners by side paths. On the sharp descent it was a different thing, and the lurching vehicle swayed and swung round ugly angles, only elusively guarded by detached stone pillars. Now and again the horses were slipping and stumbling in patches of snow or on sheets of ice, and it looked as if you were galloping into eternity. But the sturdy, strong-limbed teams were well broken, and the drivers, though they sometimes drove with shamefully loose reins, had the nerve of the coachmen of the Wild West, who skirted the verges of bottomless cañons without condescending to the brake. Going up hill, you walked and kept warm; going down, you were often chilled to the bone, for frieze ulsters and fur wrappings were little in fashion then,

and you buoyed yourself up with the prospect of hot *café au lait* at Chiavenna or Gonda. Still more cheering was the first sight of sunny Italy, with its blue lakes and rich garden grounds unrolling themselves before you. It is not easy to decide which approach to Italy is the most impressive. I give it myself in favour of the Splügen; there is a particular point where the distant woods and the trellised vines are framed in an arched setting of rugged black rock. Perhaps not the least striking features of the Simplon are the works of man—the massive masonry that buttresses the road and the refuges, and the great span of the bridging of the profound ravine to the north of the savage gorge of Gonda. The Splügen on the northern slope boasts the almost unrivalled grandeur of the Via Mala. The Stelvio, lofty as it is, like the lower Brenner, is comparatively tame. The Julier and the Albula, leading from the Grisons into the Upper Engadine, dipping often into heaven-forsaken valleys, bleak and dismal as the lower course of the Alpine Rhone, have left but a memory of cramped legs and dreary monotony. Take it from end to end, I found the St Gothard the most enjoyable, especially on the home-like Swiss slopes, where

you ascended the banks of the brawling Reuss from Fluelen to the Devil's Bridge, which, by the way, has its counterpart and namesake on the Cenis. But now the railway has revolutionised all that. A wondrous feat of engineering, it has struck a deadly blow at the picturesque. There, indeed, you see Roger's broken links, and are slow to believe that it is really the line you are travelling upon which is continually spinning round to look you in the face, like the frisky leader in a tandem. But where are the scenes you used to delight in when making the round of the Oberland on foot? I had foolishly forgotten that in an interminable tunnel we were giving the go-by to Andermatt and the Devil's Bridge, nor was I consoled by the excellent breakfast, when recalling all we had missed, I looked forward to the darksome eclipses of the descent. A Brockendon of the present day would break his heart if he took the rail on a quest for the beauties of the Passes.

Forty years ago the glories of the Alpine Club were at their zenith. Englishmen threw heart and soul into the work in which De Saussure, Bourrit, the Meyers, Agassiz, Studez, and other foreign scientists had been the pioneers. Rivalry among

friends and comrades rose to fever-heat ; carrying courage perhaps to foolhardiness, they scaled the peaks, searched industriously for dangerous passes never trodden before by human foot, explored crevassed glaciers, and trusted themselves to snow cornices which suspended them over bottomless abysses, and might be mined and loosened by a sudden rise in the temperature. Even their mountain guides, familiar with weather signs and the chances of avalanches and stone cannonades in the *couloirs*, were as much abroad as their employers in the topography of those unexplored regions. They went in for a novel course of training in the use of the rope and the ice-axe. It says much for the nerve and coolness of both amateurs and professionals that there were so few fatal accidents ; but it is notable that the most daring and successful of the climbers were men distinguished for brain power and high culture. Among those who took the lead were Mr Justice Wills, Professor Tyndall, and Sir Leslie Stephen, and the competition was keenest among the fellows of colleges and tutors let loose for an autumn holiday. Nor did they hide their lights under a bushel. In "Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers," and in the *Alpine Journals*, they took free license

to record their exploits, and sometimes, as I have heard more than one of them admit, they may have indulged in picturesque exaggeration. But when a man had been astride on the knife-like *arrête* of the Finsteraarhorn, or balancing himself for dear life on the frosted rock slopes of the Matterhorn, it was allowable to make the most of the achievement. For a time Alpine climbing became the rage, though many denounced it as mere tempting of Providence and suicidal courting of death. Perhaps the best defence is in Kennedy's story of his ascent of the Monte della Disgrazia. He was then the President of the Alpine Club.

"There is an answer more than sufficient to confute those who say that these expeditions are without aim or purpose; that those who undertake them do so solely for the purpose of saying that they have been at the top of a high mountain. I believe that they produce not only a highly beneficial effect upon the physical character, that they strengthen the constitution, and that they impart a hardihood to the frame which renders it almost impregnable to the attacks of disease; but I believe they also produce an equally beneficial effect upon the moral character, that they excite a thoughtful forethought in preparation, that they impart a self-reliance in the moment of danger, and that they give a fertility in resource where difficulties are impending."

2007-08-01

continued to let his dad's beat drive off.





The Castle and Cathedral of Lausanne.

To face p. 170





And no one illustrates and develops that theory more forcibly than Tyndall in his "Hours of Exercise in the Alps," or Stephen in his "Playground of Europe." Tyndall describes his sensations, when near losing his head, he was swept along in an avalanche; and dilates on the exhilaration and suppressed rapture of his feelings when wandering alone in a labyrinth of crevasses. He was running a race against the falling shadows on his way back to his night quarters. The glow of the sunrises, the radiance of the sunsets, the colours of the clouds flashed back from the snowy summits, brought out all the poetry latent in the nature of a climber who had manfully tackled a formidable task.

Anyhow, I remember how we who modestly kept to lower levels, and exulted in the crossing of such a pass as the Strahlek, looked with reverence on those heroes of the heights. It was a night to be marked in the memory when we came across one of those grand explorers, who had just come down with flayed face and slightly frost-bitten fingers from the Shreckhorn to the Adler at Grindelwald, or who was supping at the Monte Rosa Hôtel after forcing the old Monte Moro Pass in a blizzard. And their enjoyment of luxury after hardship was intense; a man who

was reserved and noways genial by nature would warm with good cheer and the mulled wine, and become retrospectively expansive. The ball was set rolling by Mr Justice Wills—a born mountaineer, who afterwards made his summer retreat in the Eagle's Nest in the Sixt Valley—when he took the Wetterhorn by storm in 1854: it was the first ascent from the Grindelwald side. Monte Rosa was scaled in the following year; the Shreckhorn and the Weisshorn in 1861; though the Matterhorn, defying successive attempts, held out till 1865. When Mr Ball published his exhaustive "Alpine Guide" (1868-68), scarcely a mountain or peak of any consideration had been left unconquered, and many a previously untrodden Pass had become a familiar highway.

Perhaps the celebrated guides were even more interesting, though less approachable. Some of them talked a somewhat unintelligible *patois*. Those from the French-speaking cantons were often voluble enough: the Germans for the most part were more self-contained and taciturn. Sprung from the chamois-hunters and hill shepherds, staunch and self-sacrificing, resourceful in danger, indefatigable in toil, and the incarnation of hardihood, they had formed bonds of close brotherhood

with their regular employers. Their services for the season were generally secured in advance, though the severe Chamouny rules imposed restrictions which were afterwards relaxed. Many of them had historic names, and their local reputations were soon bruited abroad through the climbing world. There were the Balmats and Tairrazs of Mont Blanc, the Taugwalders and Andreggs of Zermatt, the Almers and Bohrens of Grindelwald, Benner of the Grisons, and many another. It needed another Dumas—he professes to give the experiences of Jacques Balmat at second-hand in his “Impressions”—to do justice to their deeds, their escapes, and their idiosyncrasies. The fate of Benner, for example—he was one of the silent sort, and of a melancholy countenance which seemed to forebode his fate—was infinitely pathetic. It is related by Mr Gossett, who had engaged him for a February ascent of the Haut de Cry, in the Valais. The rash venture ended in grim tragedy, due to careless use of the rope. Crossing a *couloir*, the party were caught in a snow-slide; Benner and one of his employers perished. Gossett, who was buried up to the neck and being fast frozen in, was saved by the two surviving guides, and his escape was a miracle.



CHAPTER VIII

CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES

GREAT have been the changes in the cities of Germany. The star of the Hapsburgs has paled before that of the Hohenzollerns, and after centuries of stagnation and confusion, the empire of Charlemagne was revived under Wilhelm. Something has been said of the awakening of the slumbering Rhine towns. Cologne has become a great commercial city. Mayence was relieved of the Austrian garrison, always regarded by the Hessians as foreigners. But nowhere have the changes been more marked than in the free city of Frankfort-on-Maine. Opulent as ever—perhaps more flourishing from the financial point of view—it has been rebuilding its mansions and extending its borders. New docks and immense stations receive the traffic of eight great railways. But it has been forced to part with its cherished independence; it has lost political importance, and



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The Door of the Rathaus—Rothenburg.

To face p. 174





352 VII FRANKFORT-ON-MAIN 173

has successfully resigned itself to a moral exilium. Forty years ago it was the seat of the Diet, the controlling Bourse of Germany, and what Vienna is now for the south-east—the political meeting-board of Europe. Then all the States of Europe sent their representatives thither: it was a school of diplomacy and a centre of intrigue. There were gay scenes in the broad Zeil of an afternoon, when it was crowded with official equipages—not a few of them pitifully shabby. On the other hand, there was an oligarchy of wealth, exclusive in its way as the aristocracy of birth. Chief among them were the Bethmans, the Sterns, the Heynsen, and, above all, the Rothschilds. For Frankfort was the cradle of the Colossus of finance—who assured the Emperor of Germany that the House of Rothschild would always be on friendly relations with the House of Hapsburg—and long after the family had been manipulating millions, and influencing the issues of war and peace, the aged mother of the founder still clung piously to the Judengasse, the humours and squaker of which were so comically depicted by Doyle in his "Brown, Jones and Robinson." In that olden time Berlin was but a succubale of the Frankfort Bourse: a dependance of the great central stock-yielding

176 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

establishment. Sparing no expense, Rothschilds and Bethmans had the earliest news from every quarter; special couriers were in waiting everywhere for the latest intelligence, and their carrier-pigeons were continually on the wing. There were receptions, where financiers, ministers, and diplomatists met upon common ground, though perhaps as much business was unofficially transacted in interchange of visits of an evening at the opera. Sir Edward Malet has told us in his *Reminiscences* how ably Britain was represented by his father, and I have a grateful remembrance of the hospitality of the Legation, and of that of Herr Koch, banker, wine merchant, and British consul.

The traveller with friends or introductions lighted at once on his feet. There were two capital clubs, that of the nobles and the Bürger Verein, at either of which you might be introduced by a member; at both were a rare variety of journals in all the European languages, and the Verein had a restaurant where you could test the German cookery at its best. There you might see business men laying their heads together over their beer-tankards at the mid-day meal, talking stocks and discussing new enterprises, as at the Champeaux,

III. THE HOUSE OF GOETHE 17

Place de la Bourse in Paris. Dumas, suggestively maternal as usual, tells an amusing story illustrative of the commercial atmosphere of the city. The novelist, on the search for the birthplace of Goethe, accosted a grave-looking gentleman. The worthy citizen shook his head. "I have been a banker here for forty years: I am familiar with all the houses, but I know nothing of the house of Goethe. It must have either gone bankrupt or have no sort of reputation." The leading hotel had a wealthy clientele of cosmopolitan connoisseurs. All were good, but the cellars and cuisine of the Russie under Sarg were second to none in Europe. He prided himself specially on the excellence and variety of his liquors, and the coffee was not to be surpassed at Tortoni's as Tortoni used to be under the Empire. That fragrant Mocha drew secretaries and attaches of legations, who could have found fire tables elsewhere, and a pleasant and informal club would often assemble for supper after the opera. The Anglaise in the Boulevard, which looked new with its historically named Boulevard Haussmann, always reminded me of the old boulevard of Valenciennes such as the Theatre where the pigeons sat on the chimney. Yes, that there were suggestions of something in the mind

178 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

rangle, but the bell-wires communicated with bells on the outer walls, and the chimes began sounding from earliest morning. I had a revelation at Frankfort as to how well and how cheaply you might fare in those days if you stuck to German houses. Once when the hotels in the Zeil were overflowing I tried the Landberg, within a stone's throw, and I went there again. The patrons were chiefly commercial travellers, and invariably they have voracious appetites, with a critical taste in viands. At Messina—they overrun Sicily—I was absolutely staggered by the quantity of macaroni they shovelled down in scorching heat before proceeding to serious business. At the one o'clock dinner at the Landberg the table groaned under the good cheer, with such an endless procession of courses as at the old Bellevue of Brussels, and the charge was a florin. The suppers *à la carte*, with everything solid and indigestible, from sauerkraut and sausages to *salade à la Russe*, were quite as reasonable.

Frankfort was garrisoned then by Austrians, Prussians and Bavarians. In the uniforms of white, dark blue, and sky blue, they took the guard alternately. The good-humoured Bavarians made themselves at home with the townspeople;





The Frauen Thor—Nuremberg.



To face p. 178





the Prussians were hated like poison; but the Austrians, detested at Mayence, were adored at Frankfort. The officers had made their way among the fair sex, and many marriages were arranged between birth and money-bags, but the popularity was chiefly owing to the Jäger band, which played frequently on the Theatre Place and in the Gardens. So Austrian music did much to soothe the savage feelings of the Venetian and Veronese aristocracy, chafing under the foreign yoke.

The Free City, in the days of its independence, only ruled some ten miles of territory. When you passed the shrubberies of the shady Anlagen, musical with choirs of nightingales in the spring,—and there were severe penalties on bird-nesting—you came on all sides on barriers striped with the colours of the surrounding Principalities. Through the Bockenheimer Thor of an evening went a continuous stream of carriages, carrying Christians and Jews to the gaities of the Homburg casino, or to tempt their luck at the tables. To the east was the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel's sylvan hell of Wilhelmsbad, in woodlands seductive for picnics. But my pleasantest associations were with the forest of Hesse-Darmstadt to the south—a forest

180 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

which stretches along the Odenwald through Baden to the Canton of Basle. At that time Frankfort was a great place of resort for young Englishmen who came to study German; and subalterns who had been shelved after the Crimean War formed a little coterie by themselves. These sporting youngsters had made friends with the Darmstadt foresters, and many a pleasant excursion we had, not after game, but in pursuit of vermin. The woodmen would meet us by appointment at some *gasthaus*—where we gave them breakfast—with the long-bodied, crooked-legged dachshunds at their heels, and off we would go afterwards to the badger-holes or fox-earths, with shots *en passant* at hawk or squirrel. These badger-hounds are certainly built for burrowing, but I would back a game Scotch terrier against them, though I should not have dared to say so.

Frankfort, though it has passed under the rule of the detested Prussians, is richer than ever, and its population has increased steadily in spite of emigration to America. There, as elsewhere in regenerated Germany, architects and builders have had a good time. Among the later public attractions are a new opera-house, a new museum in the suburb of Sachsenhausen, and, above all, the

VIII.] THE BIRTH OF BERLIN 181

suburban palm garden, which bought the Duke of Nassau's rare collection of plants when he sold the contents of his glass-houses at Biebrich. The grand concert hall is a lively scene of an evening when crowded with the citizens and well-to-do artisans, and very profitable is the consumption of beer and coffee, ices and tobacco. The cosmopolitan music is better than the commissariat. No doubt the caterers consult the tastes of their supper-guests, but when I went on an evil impulse to a late dinner *à la carte*, I found myself the only occupant of the vast galleries, sitting in a dim religious light, and an exceedingly indifferent dinner I had. But the prosperous city is sadly changed since the days of the Diet, when the golden youth of diplomacy entertained at the Russie.

Berlin had never any attraction for me, or, as I should fancy, for any one else. Dumped down on a sandy plain, it was built to military order like St Petersburg, and laid out in blocks by brigades and battalions. The land being worth intrinsically nothing, the width of the leading thoroughfares was depressing, though afterwards the poorer quarters became overcrowded. There was no ground-fall, and the sewers, meandering on a level with the Spree, used to stink abominably.

182 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

The stunted trees in the Thiergarten struggled against northern gales and adverse influences, but no money had been spared to embellish the lagoons and pleasure-grounds of Potsdam and Charlottenburg. Unter den Linden, with its stately avenue of limes, leading from the Arch of Victory to the congress of Heroes in marble grouped before the Royal Palace, was always a magnificent boulevard; but even there, for long, the best hotels ran to length instead of height, and were far from imposing. Berlin, with its grey skies and searching winds, is a place where the tourist takes his pleasures rather sadly, nor is there the contagion of joyous good fellowship to carry him away. The only time I saw that military metropolis to advantage was when the Kaiser Wilhelm made his triumphant entry at the head of his victorious troops. He had left his capital the King of Prussia; he came back the German Emperor, and the exultation of the Brandenburgers knew no bounds. For once Unter den Linden was made impassable by shouting crowds, fringed with the glittering bayonets of the Landwehr and Landsturm, under Venetian streamers and festoons of laurel. The climax came in the memorable ceremony when William the Conqueror met the

estates of the realm in the White Hall of the Palace. The veteran Field-Marshal Von Wrangel, a shrivelled relic of half-forgotten wars, held the banner behind the Emperor, and Von Moltke, the organiser of the conquest, bore the sword of state.

No: the Brandenburgers, bred on an inhospitable soil and in an ungenial climate, are not a joyous people, though, like all Germans, they are great patrons of the theatres and garden music-halls. One could always pass an amusing enough evening at the casinos in the Thiergarten, or in the minor theatres, where the bourgeois comedies were laughable and characteristic, though the local *patois*—Schmidt and Müller used to talk it in “Kladderatch”—made them difficult to follow. One great change has taken place in the last thirty years, which does not add to the popular gaiety nor tend to diminish the death-rate. The lower orders used to soak themselves in harmless beer; now they indulge in the vile potato brandy, almost as poisonous and quite as cheap as the trade gin which the Hanse towns export to Western Africa. Berlin, whose population has been advancing by leaps and bounds, draining the agricultural districts and depopulating the villages, has the most turbulent proletariat in Europe,



Barcelona scarcely excepted. And the *Judenhetze* has some excuse, for it is a revolt of the Germans against the growing ascendancy of the wealthy Jew. It is the Jews who finance and control the press, and make advances on hard or usurious terms to the impecunious of all classes, from the junker to the mechanic.

A contrast in every way was Old Vienna. Going south, you passed from shadow into sunshine. No song in that city of mirth and music was more patriotically chorused than that with the refrain—

"Es ist nur eine Kaiserstadt,
Es ist nur eine Vien."

So the traveller came prepared for enjoyment. There was no delusion as to the fascinations and singular beauties of the environs. Vienna is surrounded by magnificent natural parks, like that which industrial America has set apart for the delectation of tourists in the West, and by historical scenes consecrated by memories of the wars waged by the Cross against the Crescent. To the northwest is the Kahlenberg, whence a rocket gave notice to the beleaguered city of the relief brought by Sobieski and the Duke of Lorraine; to the north the Marchfeldt, where Napoleon was brought to a





The Castle and North Wall—Nuremberg.

To face p. 184





check by an Austrian Archduke educated in his own school. The Marchfeldt is tame as the sands of Berlin, but the Viennese loved to make the most of a dubious victory, which flickered through the darkness with a gleam of hope. My first evening in the Kaiserstadt took me to the Volksgarten, where they were commemorating Aspern and the Archduke Charles with bouquets of fireworks and brilliant transparencies. Schönbrunn had more humiliating recollections, for there Napoleon, from the private apartments of the Roman Emperors, had dictated his arbitrary terms of peace. But Schönbrunn, with its gardens, its restaurants, and *gasthouses* was easily accessible, and offered delightful shade and pleasant *al fresco* dinners of a summer afternoon. On none of the roads were the omnibuses, and afterwards the tramcars, more overcrowded, and nowhere was the good humour of the Viennese more conspicuous than on those tramcars. On the platform at the back you could scarcely find footing, and if there were rules as to the number of passengers, by smiling consent they were recklessly overridden. To the southward cars and rail led into sequestered valleys, romantic as any in Tyrol or the Salzkammergut, but with the

difference that everywhere there were supping places and dancing saloons, and every sort of provision for good eating and drinking. It was a land flowing with hill streams and cheap wine, for the Vöslauer and other generous vintages are grown on each sunny slope. Above all, within a short drive was the Prater, the wildest and most picturesque recreation ground of any populous city. The favourite drives were crowded of an evening with fashionable equipages and equestrians. There were gigantic *chasseurs* in the barbaric splendour of mediæval costume, and Austrian and Hungarian nobles mounted on hacks which would have drawn envious attention in Rotten Row, and fetched fancy prices at Tattersall's. But, unlike Hyde Park, there the populace were made welcome, and at the western end *charbonnier était maître chez lui*. Something like a perpetual Bartholomew Fair was going forward—it had a boom at Easter, Whitsunday, and Michaelmas—with booths and shows and mountebanks; there was continual frying of sausages and Viennese schnitzels and replenishing of beer-jugs. Yet if you wandered away down the course of the Danube, you might easily go astray in the bosky solitudes. You might rouse a startled deer from his lair, and beavers were said to build

their dams in the river, though I never had the luck to set eyes on one.

No wonder the Viennese made the most of those outlets, for it must be owned that the city itself was somewhat grim and forbidding. The old fortifications had been laid out with shrubs and flowers, and the cannon which had belched fire on the Turks and the French had been consigned as souvenirs to the arsenal with the matchlocks and cuirasses. But the ancient town was still strictly laced in the girdle of the glacis, and contained barely 60,000 inhabitants. It was divided between pleasure and business. Industrials and artisans were housed in the suburbs of Marienhilf, the Landstrasse, the Leopoldstadt, and some thirty others of less extent. In the city itself, generally cramped and overcrowded, were breathing spaces here and there, and notably the Burgplatz before the Imperial Palace, which under the most aristocratic of *régimes* was open to everybody. Indeed, the several castes were so sharply defined, that there was no danger of condescension encouraging familiarity. The nobility was the most exclusive in Europe, and among themselves and at the court, pedigrees were carefully scrutinised and quarterings counted. As in Bavaria, the man of

rank and birth would invite a *roturier* neighbour to join his *chasse*, and ask him hospitably to dinner. That inferred nothing more than friendly recognition, if they met afterwards in the Gräben or the Maximilian Strasse. Foreigners were on a somewhat different footing, and might be accepted as honorary members of the inner circle. The Hungarians had an enthusiasm for English sportsmen; the Austrians had extraordinary admiration and respect for diplomats. Nevertheless, they drew the line severely at what they were pleased to call trade. I remember the late Sir Seymour Fitzgerald telling me of a case in point. A fellow *attaché* of his was discovered to be a son of one of our leading financial families of long descent, though drawing its income from a city bank. With talent and money and agreeable manners to recommend him, he was cold-shouldered and ignored in all intercourse with the embassy, and the tact of a gifted ambassador found the social difficulty insurmountable.

That "Graben" is suggestive of Old Vienna as a historic and mediæval survival. All the names smacked of antiquity, of wars, and primitive simplicity. The most attractive shops were in the Gräben or ditch. The best hotels were in

the narrow Kärnthez Strasse, where, between the cramped and lofty buildings, there was little air and less light. There were fashionable cafés and restaurants in the Kohlmarkt. Palaces, legations, and clubs of the nobles were not in "streets," but in the *gasses* or lanes. On a reception night the crush of carriages made these narrow thoroughfares perilous for pedestrians. At all times, in muddy weather, with the narrow strips of pavement, it was impossible to avoid being splashed from hat to heel; and if you did not travel with a valet or a courier, you must be liberal of tips to the boots. In fact, in Vienna, which was not otherwise very extravagant in those days, the tipping ran to a good deal of money. You tipped the servants when you went out to dinner; you tipped daily at the restaurant in your own hotel, which was open to all-comers; and the stately porter expected a preliminary retaining fee, with frequent refreshers if you prolonged your stay. To do him justice he was ready to give any sort of service, for a certain license was tolerated in the hotels, though less scandalously ostentatious than in those of Jassy or Bucharest. After the building boom, and during the Great Exhibition, the tipping became more of a tax than ever. At the Grand Hotel you were

190 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

served by hordes of rapacious waiters, who had probably paid for their places, and gave the broadest hints after each separate meal. If you did not submit to be fleeced; they waited for their revenge. The late General Eber, then *Times* correspondent, took a philosophic view of it, saying that in scattering his florins and casting his bread upon the waters, he considered he was humanising South German humanity in the rough.

In my favourite quarters at the Archduke Charles the service was *à la carte*, and the *cuisine* unimpeachable. In the autumn you had all sorts of game in perfection, for nothing surpasses the wild-bred pheasants of Bohemia or the hares and roe-deer, knocked over by the hundred or thousand in the battues. In Vienna all the world dined early—the state dinners at the Burgschloss generally came off at 4 P.M.—and early supper was the time of conviviality, when *viveurs* began to make a night of it. There was a gay scene of an evening in the dining saloon of the Archduke, brilliant with the uniforms of Lancers, Hussars, and the Hungarian Bodyguard. Many of the officers were wealthy, and none paid much regard to money; but it was notable that in one respect they were economical, from taste rather than from

frugality. There was seldom any of the popping of champagne corks which enlivened banquets at the Café Anglais or the Maison Dorée at Paris. The favourite beverage was the amber-coloured Vienna beer, and they could hardly have done better. I used to keep down my bills by drinking it myself, or the Vöslauer or Erlauer, which was little more expensive. Dreher with his flourishing brewery had realised what Johnson offered for sale at Thrall's—"the potentiality of becoming rich beyond the dreams of avarice." His beer was laid on to all the festal resorts, as Manchester and Glasgow fetch their water from Thirlmere or Loch Katrine.

Moore sang that a Persian's heaven was easily made with black eyes and lemonade. Beer and music made the paradise of the Viennese. Very different the beer was from the dark brew of the Bavarians, and you saw the difference in the temperament of the people, for one was stolid and the other sprightly. Each evening, when the weather was fine, there was *al fresco fête* in the Volksgarten. Strauss and Lanner, through a couple of generations, had been educating the popular taste in lively melody. Johann Strauss, who led the orchestra in my early days, had inherited his

192 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

father's genius; the lighter dance music and waltzes of almost pathetic sweetness were his specialities. When he made one of his many hits, the enthusiasm in the Central Hall ran to fever heat, till the vociferous applause threatened to crack the windows. At Sperl's saloon a lower, or rather a more mixed, audience were still more demonstrative. When a song caught on, they yelled the choruses and drowned the accompaniment; they stamped their feet, clattered forks and glasses, and shook the tables till there was breakage of crockery. There everything passed in good humour, and damages were easily settled; but there were night concerts of a lower depth, where orgie often degenerated into free fights, though they were under the surveillance of the armed police.

The Viennese artisans had great artistic taste; wages were low, as living was cheap, and they did their work leisurely. They excelled in wood-carving—in their trophies of flowers and fruit and game. It was as well worth while going a round of the leading upholsterers, as of the studios of the sculptors in Rome. Another speciality was in coquettish nicknacks—the costly trifles were given as wedding presents. Elephants' tusks, rhinoceros



horns, and walrus teeth found a ready market in Vienna. But what specially tempted the smoker in the Gräben was the pipe-shops. Klitch, with his *corps* of clever carvers, was easily the first. In his windows there was a rare show of meerschaum wedded to such amber as you scarcely saw in the bazaars of Constantinople or Smyrna. One masterpiece stood in his window for years, meant for ornament and ostentation rather than for use. On the stem behind the bowl was an exquisite model of St Stephen's Cathedral from basement to spire—a pipe far more cumbrous than that put in Master Humphrey's mouth in the engraving in the original edition of "The Clock." I always brought away some specimen of Klitch's handiwork; but there was one fatal objection to the enjoyment of those pipes—that with reasonably mild tobacco they would never colour. The workmanship would have been wasted on more porous material—it would have been committing the bas-reliefs of the Parthenon to façades of crumbling sandstone.

What a transformation there was in the Vienna of the Exhibition year! The old city had burst its bounds with a vengeance, and was loosely girdled with a circle of magnificent Rings. Specu-

194 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

lation in building and stock-jobbing had run riot. In the old days the paper currency had sometimes been at a discount of 80 per cent. or more—of late years credit had been inflated in the over-confidence that portended the collapse. It was significant that a superb new Bourse was opened with great ceremony on the Western Ring a day after the fair, and on the eve of the general bankruptcy. The boom preceding the *Krach* had brought disappointment and feverish apprehensions. Great landowners had committed themselves beyond their means; frugal burghers had been tempted into the swim, and saw themselves being swamped with their lifelong savings. The wildest rumours were afloat, and there were even mutterings as to the stability of the Rothschilds. Speculators were scarcely reassured by seeing the serenity of the old Baron, as he was drawn about the Exhibition grounds in his donkey chair, or by the genial *bonhomie* of Sir Anthony, who had a suite of rooms in the Grand Hotel. New hotels had been rising everywhere, and those in the Kärnther Strasse had gone out of fashion and out of date. What a change there was in the Archduke Charles, where I occasionally dropped in for supper! The gay uniforms were gone, and the saloon was as dull and almost

as deserted as a luncheon bar in the city of London after business hours. The rise in prices everywhere had been enormous, and though foreigners felt it most in the new caravanserais, it touched the citizens in their favourite resorts, where the charges used to be ridiculously cheap.

There have been no such transformation scenes in the minor German capitals. Munich and Stuttgart are much as they were; the former had been lavishly beautified by the æsthetic tastes of the eccentric Wittelbachers, who drained the country to glorify the capital, and the latter lay half asleep among its vine-clad hills, enlivened and excited from time to time by family quarrels and court intrigues. Dresden, then as now, had a magnetic attraction for English folk. There was no more agreeable berth among legations of the second rank, Tuscany perhaps excepted, for a minister with a love for art and music, who liked a quiet life. The English residents, and those who wintered there, were of a superior class, though often straightened in circumstances, and they were warmly welcomed at a court, which, with its stately ceremonial, was nevertheless simple and inexpensive in its habits. It was the sort of society described in "Vanity

Fair," where Tapeworm, our envoy at Pumpernickel, took up Mrs George Osborne and her company. The tourist not pressed for time in spring or summer found it hard to tear himself away. Many a week I have passed at the Bellevue—never was name more appropriate—looking down from its beautiful gardens on the Elbe, and away to the hills of the Saxon Switzerland. On rainy days there was the picture-gallery, with its Madonna di San Sisto, its Raphaels and Holbeins, on which you might muse and dream from cushioned lounges; there was the *Schatzkammer*, a seductive and suggestive school of history, with its rare antiquities and inestimable jewels. On sultry afternoons, when disposed to indolence, you had the best ices and most fragrant coffee in the world on the Brühl Terrace, looking up the river to the Saxon Highlands, and kept awake by inspiring martial music. And in the old opera-house, since burned down, with the sympathetic but severely critical audience, the varied *repertoire* was always being enriched by the latest operas of the masters. There, from a luxurious stall costing a florin, I heard the first presentation of *Tannhäuser*, with the deafening crashes, which were somewhat doubtfully received,

Wagner, idolised at Munich, was no great favourite with the Saxons.

The scenes in the Saxon Switzerland in Whitsun-week were things to be remembered. There was the strangest mingling of the prosaic and the sentimental, of the picturesque and the vulgar. It was a witches' Sabbath—the broad humours of a Bartholomew Fair in the most romantic surroundings. All Dresden had broken loose for a holiday, and was piously indulging in the immemorial licence of eating, drinking, and smoking, singing patriotic songs and shouting choruses. Solemn professors and steady-going burghers looked on complacently when they did not chime in. Facetious students mounted the stone steps to the Prebischthor, and delivered bombastic discourses to a delighted audience. The steamers plying on the river were overcrowded like the Gravesend boats on a Sunday, and half-drunken fiddlers, scraping villainously out of time, reaped a rich harvest in coppers. Yet it was characteristic of the Germans that many of the trippers took their amusements sensibly, if not sadly. You came on family parties in sequestered glades, who had gone far from the madding crowds with their refreshment baskets; and if you wandered farther



198 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

there were pale-faced girls sketching, or spectacled scientists industriously netting butterflies or filling the green botanical cases slung to their shoulders.

Dresden, though taking things easily and expiating political tergiversations, had been keeping pace with the times. It was a sharp transition to the old capitals of the Prince-Bishops in Franconia, and the dead-alive free cities of the Empire which had been merged in Bavaria. There was Würzburg, with its court-deserted palace, a Versailles in miniature, a melancholy memorial of vanished grandeur—to which one looked across from the *salon* of the Kronprinz over a flask of the Steinwein—with its Romanesque cathedral and its thirty churches; and Bamberg, with its rival cathedral in identical style, adorned by the genius of Albert Dürer. I shall never forget the scene in the market-place there—a market-place as picturesque as the Grande Place of Brussels—when I opened my window in the freshness of the early morning. Not the Black Forest or Brittany Bretonnante, nor the Forest Cantons of a *fête* day, could show such a variety of mediæval costume. It was not as if the peasantry were got up *en fête*, sporting all their heirlooms on their persons, like villagers of Friesland or fisher-folk of the Zuyder



VIII.] AUGSBURG AND REGENSBURG 199

Zee; but the antiquated cut of the every-day dress was set off in a variegated blaze of colours.

In Augsburg and Regensburg there has been comparatively little change. In Augsburg, with little *arrière pensée*, you can still tread the broad thoroughfare of the Maximilian Strasse, looking up at gabled mansions with their projecting eaves and their dormer windows, as rich burghers built them in their palmy days. You can still sip the local wines from the famed cellars of the Drei Mohren, in the very saloon, with its carved beams and gilded ceiling, in which the princely Fugger—a Sidonia of the Middle Ages—is said to have burned the bonds of his imperial guest in a blaze fragrant with clove and cinnamon. It is certain, at least, that Fugger financed Castille, when Charles, notwithstanding the wealth of the Indies, was impecunious as his grandfather Maximilian, and had to regulate his policy by his purse. At Augsburg there is much to remember and little to regret. Neither there nor at Regensburg has there been any great revival of prosperity, though both have begun to wake up. Regensburg is still the mediæval town where emperors held their courts and where diets assembled. In the faded splendours of the Street of Ambassadors are still to be

200 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

seen, over crumbling doorways, the winged lion of St Mark and the eagle of the Austrian Archdukes.

Very different is the case at Nuremberg, and in the last forty years there have been sad changes for the better and the worse. For the better, so far as the citizens are concerned, for the municipality is flourishing again, borrowing and spending; enterprise is active, business is brisk, and, as in England, the peasants of Franconian farms are attracted to the city by high wages and the better education which nurses social ambitions. Forty years ago Nuremberg was unique as Papal Rome: time had touched, but had scarcely altered it. Like Pompeii, it was an unimpaired memorial of a vanished past. In Würzburg and Bamberg, the snug seats of wealthy Prince-Bishops, you saw the spires of countless churches, the lofty roofs of innumerable convents and hospices, clustered around the episcopal palaces. In Nuremberg there were churches also, and of the noblest—for the palace of a priest there was the Castle of the Kaisers; but trade, industry, and commerce had set their stamp upon the town. It was ruled by an oligarchy of patrician merchants, arbitrary and cruel as the Venetian secret councils, but who



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The Church of St. Lawrence—Nuremberg.

To face p. 200





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nevertheless had to court and keep popularity by lavish expenditure upon local objects. They had to plot and counterplot with envious intriguers, and, though there was no lion's mouth in the wall of the *Rathhaus*, they lived in the terror of malignant *espionnage*. Their riches overflowed into the streets, adorned with fountains as beautiful as that of the Trevi; with the churches embellished with masterpieces of sculpture and metal-work, and with the most exquisite stained glass of the period. All that wealth of artistic treasure happily escaped the iconoclast, for the Nurembergers early embraced the Reformed doctrines. Unlike Regensburg, which stood seventeen sieges and was repeatedly stormed, Nuremberg, though beleaguered, was never carried by assault. Wallenstein pillaged, but did not burn and destroy; and, as Blücher flatteringly remarked of London when entertained by the Corporation, what a city it was for the sack! It was for Germany what Bruges had been for the Netherlands: its merchants had their agents in every port, and owned or chartered galleons upon every sea. It needed no statistics to prove their former opulence; you saw the evidences everywhere in mansions and magazines, built for eternity rather than time, with their roods of lofty roof

202 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

obtruding themselves on the spacious thoroughfares. There were richly elaborated façades, surmounted by turrets and pointed gables—a blend of the bureau and place of business with the palace. There were ramifications of courts and quadrangles in the rear, with outlets on the lanes behind, where the wains were loaded with the bales and crates. All that accumulation of wealth demanded safeguards, and the city was encircled by walls of stupendous strength, and moats deep and wide flooded from the Pegnitz.

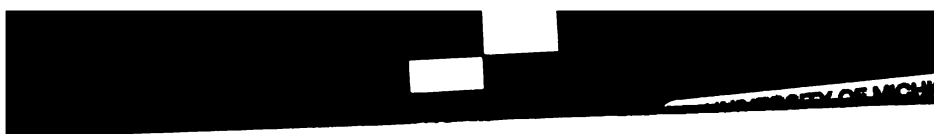
But all that period of wealth and prosperity passed away, and until the age of rail and steel, followed by the industrial revival of Germany, life was as sluggish within the venerable walls as the river that ran through the town. Descendants of the old patricians were content to pinch and save; to weave coarse cloths and to turn out cheap toys. The most affluent citizens did not go in for show, and the dress of the women of all ranks was sober, quaint, and old-fashioned. When you sauntered out of the Rothes Ross—a most comfortable old-fashioned inn—into the silent streets of an evening, they seemed haunted by the shade of Albert Dürer. Indeed, from morning to eve they were infested by artists, amateur and professional; and

it was perhaps the only town in Europe where these good folks could sketch without impertinent surveillance. I have seen a lady sitting on a shawl in the Albrecht Dürer Platz, with only a couple of small boys looking over her shoulder. It was partly, perhaps, because the sight was so common, but chiefly because the townsfolk were drowsily apathetic.

Now, to one's selfish sorrow, they have roused themselves with a vengeance, and have knocked their venerable city about in such a manner, that very unmistakably they have been making money, hand over hand. Most of the towns, even though stranded by a receding tide or simply standing still, have been making slow yet sensible progress since the Middle Ages. Augsburg, Regensburg, and Würzburg had been almost stationary, but Nuremberg, in the course of centuries, had shrunk from 70,000 inhabitants to little less than a third of that number. Consequently there was ample elbow room for all; there was no letting houses at any reasonable rent, and the choicest building sites brought but a trifle in the estate market. The change came as suddenly as it was unforeseen. Nuremberg opened credits with Frankfort and Berlin, and banks in these cities started local

204 CHANGES IN GERMAN CITIES [CHAP.

agencies. The Nurembergers really opened their eyes when finance companies offered strange facilities and began vigorously to compete for business. The boom was on like the May-fly in a Hampshire stream in a genial spring, but the speculation had solid foundation. Profits realised themselves automatically, and prosperity had come to stay. Sites and ground-rents have never risen to such prices as in revolutionised Cologne, but that boom burst through the mediæval barriers, and has breached the ancient walls. Factories and workshops, suburban villas in gardens and dwellings for the artisans have been rising in the meadows that were whitened by the tents of Gustavus Adolphus when he was playing out his losing match with the Duke of Friedland. The core of the old free city is still in tolerable preservation, but the shell has been shattered, and a picturesque idiosyncrasy has been ruined irretrievably. Without a seaport or navigable river, with neither coal fields nor iron mines near at hand, enterprise has triumphed over all disadvantages, and created a great manufacturing centre with machine factories and electrical works of world-wide reputation. Rothenburg, on the contrary, another grey city of the Empire, once ruling a principality of twelve square miles, is a relic of



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The Rathaus—Rothenburg
from Schmidt Strasse.

To face p. 204





mediævalism that has scarcely been tampered with. Time has touched it, but progress has passed it by, and with its walls and towers, and its grand old *Rathhaus*, it is a Nuremberg in miniature, as Nuremberg used to be. The railway had given it the go-by, and there was a nine-mile drive from the nearest station. The traveller found quarters at the Schwan: the venerable town is picturesquely situated on a hill above the Tauber, and the æsthetic visitor or the artist, now as then, has many a temptation to linger. The high Church of St James, with its architecture, sculptures, carvings and quaint paintings, in itself was enough to console one for two hours of jolting in the *eilwagen*. Unfortunately in one most characteristic feature the comparison with Nuremberg fails, for the Castle of Rothenburg was razed long ago, and all that remains to mark the site is the Chapel of St Blaize.

CHAPTER IX

THE VETTURINO

WITH the confiscation of the Church temporalities and the laying of the railway lines, the vetturino vanished. The capacious vettura, with its leisurely ways, was an ideal form of old-time travel. You started at your own hour; you loitered when and where you pleased. The vetturino acted as purser, and relieved you of all trouble, but he took his orders from his temporary masters. No one can complain of the excessive pace of Italian expresses, but now you are hustled by the rail from centre to centre. With a through ticket from Charing Cross, dining and sleeping cars make you independent of stoppages. Even busy men of culture, whose holidays are brief, easily fall into American fashions. They never realise how much they miss, or how infinitely more enjoyable it would be to do their Italy by sections. But even in the olden time, admirable posting arrangements were





Wurzburg, from the Bridge.

To face p. 206





a strong inducement to put on the pace. The roads along the Riviera, in Tuscany, and more especially in retrograde Naples, might have been masterpieces of MacAdam. Brisk postillions rattled you onward from stage to stage in confident hope of a generous *buono mano*; and in Sicily, as in Hungary, a half-savage driver would spring to his feet and whoop like a demon, as he sent half-broken horses down some steep incline, seldom troubling to put the brake on. Expostulations were vain, or were mistaken for incentives. There were timid travellers who shuddered and foreswore the post for the future, when they shunned the ugly angles of precipices, or had safely negotiated some high-arched bridge, spanning the depths of a brawling torrent. Bolder spirits were apt to be demoralised by the intoxication of rapid motion; Dr Johnson's affection for the post-chaise became a passion, and they would make urgent private affairs the pretext for bargaining with the post-bureau. But the real lover of Italy, the dilettante devoted to its art, and enamoured of the classical beauties of its varied scenery, always clung fondly to the vettura. It was an eminently sociable conveyance. If the solitary tourist took a place in one of the public carriages, nothing could be more

uncomfortable. I tried it once, and even in point of economy it proved a failure, for I sacrificed the better part of the fare. The jaded and over-taxed horses seldom went out of a jog-trot, and often came to a standstill on the hills when they were not reinforced by a span of oxen. The driver was autocratic and crusty; the halting-places were arranged without regard to the quality of the inns; and then, though tolerably case-hardened before, I had the saddest experience of Italian cookery. But most of your fellow-travellers were independent of the set meals they must have regarded as Apician luxury. They fed promiscuously, at all hours, out of baskets and bundles, and the interior—the windows were hermetically sealed—was reeking of rancid oil and garlic. A child or two were crawling about your legs, and babies in arms were satisfying insatiable thirst. For in the primeval towns and villages we were continually picking up and setting down, and you came across companions of all classes. Lost among loose packages, you were stifled in fusty straw. When I crossed the Apennines in a bitterly cold night, a rough peasant, got up comfortably in sheepskins, savagely resented my wrapping a plaid round my legs. "*Donna!*" he contemptuously ejaculated, and though I did

not give up my plaid, for the sake of peace I practised the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, and metaphorically turned my cheek to the smiter.

Very different it was when you had arranged a congenial party. For the Naples road, you deliberately chose your friends, the familiar associates of the Roman season. Six was the ideal number—four in the interior, two in the *banquette*; so you could count on your rubber in the evening, with a spare couple to cut in. The most enjoyable of my various drives from Rome to Naples was when the other five were members of the same regiment, and accepted me as an honorary member of the mess. They were men of the world, and some of Her Majesty's hard bargains, and there was no pipeclay in the talk. Rather weary of Rome, though looking forward to a return for Holy Week, we were all longing for a change, breathing more freely when we had left the walls behind. The first night was passed at Cisterna, capital of the vast domains once ruled by the great family of the Gaetani. I knew the gloomy hostelry well, as I had made it my headquarters for snipe-shooting. Next morning there was an early start, and it was a luxury to have no bother about the bill, which was settled by the vetturino. It was a dreary

drive across the Pontine marshes from Nettuno to Terracina. Drowsy after a late rubber, there was a sense of sinister excitement in the warning of a friendly doctor against going to sleep on the Enchanted Ground. The air was soporific, and you were always nodding and waking up again. Yet the sedgy expanse, the home of the wild boar and the buffalo, with the innumerable water-fowl of many species, with the hawks sweeping in circles high in the air, and the ravens and carrion crows croaking dismally, had a fascination of its own. The sun rising like an orb of dull copper, then brightening into a glorious blaze, drew up the mists, wreathing them in fantastic forms, and colouring them with lurid lights. The reed-thatched huts were few and far between; here and there you came across a solitary herdsman or woodman, with a far-away look in his listless eyes, which scarce glanced at the passing carriage. If the figures between Civita Vecchia and Rome had been wasted and the faces cadaverous, here the people at the post-houses were walking skeletons and the livid complexions were corpse-like. The classical name of Forum Appii still survived in a ruckle of tumble-down buildings, and it struck you that the Christians of Rome gave a signal proof of affection to the Apostle when

they came on foot to welcome him at the Three Taverns; though, indeed, they lived always in terror of death, and probably these wastes were then less pestilential.

Through the forenoon we had sulked in silence in clouds of tobacco-smoke, keeping sad or sentimental reflections to ourselves, and correcting the damp of the atmosphere with cognac. At Terracina we emerged with buoyant spirits into a brilliant transformation scene. One of the delights of the vettura travel was the constant meetings with friends, and the impromptu picnics, got up on the spur of the moment. The first thing we saw on arrival at the inn was another vehicle, even more capacious than our own, which had started earlier from Cisterna, and the first thing we heard echoing down the darksome passages and staircases were peals of joyous laughter. A family of lively and exceedingly pretty girls were on their way to Naples in care of a good-natured old aunt, who was notable for intelligent attention to the commissariat, and did not look too prudishly after her charges. Gallant officers shook themselves and brightened up, to be forthwith enlisted as porters and carriers. Baskets were brought forth, weighted with bottles and packed with *patés* and

confectionery from Nazzari's. The Pontine Marshes were a thousand miles away. Flirtations, scarcely interrupted, were renewed where they had been left off. The old lady, looking like a jolly female Bacchus, was mounted with some effort on a steady donkey, which was led with some trouble in rear of the party. And then, under a cloudless sky, with the azure sea behind, we sealed the heights among beds of thyme and bursting wild-flowers to a crest where, looking seaward to the Ponza Isles, the cloth was spread for luncheon. A strolling *pifferaro* who had attached himself to us volunteered to pipe, and though the carpet of grey shale and green turf was somewhat rough, and the music better suited to an *osteria* than to a ball-room, I doubt whether there had been a merrier dance that winter in Rome. At any rate it was answerable for one happy marriage.

Mola di Gaeta was a charming halting-place, replete with classical memories, with comfortable rooms, a respectable *cuisine*, a capital cellar, and a sulky landlord. But the vetturino was upon honour; cigar-cases and spirit-flasks had put him in rare good humour, and it was his business to throw oil on troubled waters. Indeed these vetturini, when well-managed, were the most

efficient of couriers, and you had the best the house could supply at two-thirds of the charges when you were posting. Mola was famous for its sardines and mullets, and, above all, the full-flavoured Formian from the sunny vineyards on the seaward slopes was not unworthy of the reputation it had enjoyed for a score of centuries. It came up in bottles instead of amphoræ; it was not bedevilled by honey, spices or other blends; though luscious, the sweetness was tempered by age, and there was not a headache in it next morning. Nevertheless, perhaps a little of it goes a long way, like old East Indian Madeira and the deleterious Jurançon of the Gave de Pau. Certainly, if it ever figured in Neapolitan wine *cartes*, it was seldom or ever asked for. But as for local wines, what with the Lachrymæ Christi grown on the Vesuvian lava, and the Capri, visitors to Naples have no reason to complain either of cost or quality. When I shivered through a winter at Sorrento, although the cold and damp were scarcely suited to them, I never cared to change. The medicated Marsala in popular use is a poor alternative, for the best Marsala is doctored for the markets. The genuine wine is of the faintest straw colour. I tried it once when driving from Palermo to Suggestum; a passing

waggoner offered to tap one of his casks for us, and to our shame we consented. The hospitable Mr Ingham, head of the great Marsala house, avowed that they had to modify it for British palates, as the Oporto merchants transmogrify grapes of the Douro into the loaded beverage we know as Port. But the Lachrymæ and the Capri are pure. The one associates itself with "native" oysters in the island *osteria* of the Lucrine Lake, the other with sardines fresh from the nets, served with frizzled parsley, preceding macaroni boiled in milk and sprinkled with Parmesan—a veritable Neapolitan breakfast.

Our vetturino expedition to Pæstum was exciting, or at least racy of the Campanian soil. Not long before, the brigands had made a grand *coup*, and carried off a couple of Englishmen. They had been released on paying a heavy ransom, and the authorities were all on the alert. Even in comparatively quiet times the floating brigand rumours were always exaggerated in the capital. The winter I spent at Sorrento I learned to my surprise from local journals that I had been tempting Providence when I took my walks abroad, and they seldom ended before dusk. Never a soul save peaceful peasants crossed my path, and I knew I was quite as

safe as in Pall Mall. But when we went to Pæstum there seemed more substance in the smoking-room talk. It made my soldier-friends keener than ever on the excursion, but they took their campaigning precautions, and of course our vetturino raised his charges. We were duly equipped with revolvers and ammunition, and it was arranged that in the cover where the last capture had come off, we should go on foot, and send a vedette in advance of the main body. We might have saved our money and spared our trouble. At each turn of the road there were patrols of mounted *gend-armerie*—magnificent-looking men, though, like all the troops of King Bomba, most reliable in ceremonial parade; furthermore, there were pickets of light cavalry, and for once the solitude of his temples in the plague-stricken swamps was enlivened by the camp-fire songs of soldiers under canvas in the colonnades of the fane of the Sea-god. As was then the fashion, in response to diplomatic representations, the Neapolitans had shut the door when the horse was stolen, and they were mounting guard over the mosquitoes when the brigands had scattered to their mountain retreats.

The direct route from Rome to Florence by Siena was relatively dull, though it lay through

the sites of Etruscan cities, and abounded in objects of antiquarian interest. It was an enchanting detour by way of Terni and Foligno, Narni and Perugia. Without allowing for delays to which you were in every way tempted, it took four and a half days in ordinary course of travel. Each stage was a study of the sublime or picturesque, a romance of the historical, or a commentary on the classical poets. The snow-topped peak of Soracte, the high-arched spans of the ruined bridge of Narni, celebrated by Martial, with its festoons of maiden-hair drooping over "the pale waves of Nar"; the Falls of Terni, with the deafening roar of the Hell of Waters, and the clouds of snow-flake foam over the seething cauldron, where Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice; the Porto d'Annibale of Spoleto, where the Carthaginian is said to have for once been repulsed; the meadows of Clitunnus, where the milk-white steers of Central Italy and Tuscany are still to be seen wandering, as when Lars Porsena marched on Rome; the churches, the convents, the crypts, and the frescoes of Assisi; the paintings of Perugia, the seat of the Umbrian School, which drew Lord Leighton, with growing fascination, year after year; most impressive of all, the Lake of Thrasimene, where each detail of the

battle may still be distinctly realised by reference to Hobhouse's notes to "Childe Harold."

But in point of scenery, perhaps nothing in Europe can compare with the long drive along the Riviera. It is hard to say whether the Riviera di Levante or the Riviera di Ponente is the more enchanting. Each stage opens up fresh scenes of beauty. In the railway you burrow where the scenery is best. With the vettura you scaled height after height, glad to stretch your legs, and you lingered at each zigzag to look entranced over the expanse of sea, to gather wild-flowers, to catch butterflies, to examine some fragment of ruin, till you were passed by the lumbering vehicle and cursed below his breath by the driver. The road had seemingly been engineered for the delectation of the tourist. Roughly it had followed the lines of the primitive ledge—the Cornice—only to be trodden by sure-footed mules and pack-horses, and that with infinite peril. Even now there was some *souçon* of danger in sharp angles indifferently guarded by low parapets. You looked down into rifts without seeing the bottom, between cliffs where the hawks and the crows had their nesting-places in a scrub of copse rather African than European. The flowers and the forestry all

savoured of the south, and on these stony slopes there was a wealth of vegetation which surpassed the luxuriance of Tuscany or the Romagna. White villas and cottages were tossed down at random through gardens of olives, oranges, and lemons. The aloe, an African importation, had taken root in the soil and naturalised itself, hedging the enclosures with impracticable barriers. The palm had been brought from Palestine by the Crusaders to glorify the great ceremonies of the Catholic Church. Conspicuous above the green and the brown were the black masses of the stone-pine, recalling the landscapes of Claude and Salvator. Everything was now peaceful enough, and the peasant went about his labour, repairing the winter damages in profound security. But the "Barbary towers" crowning the eminences reminded one of the days when the Crescent flag was the terror of the sea-board, and nothing near it was safe from the descents of the corsairs. Among all the views, the one I best remember is that of Genoa la Superba from Recco. Emerging from a short tunnel blasted in the rock, the grand amphitheatre of the city of the mercantile republic lies beneath you, palaces rising above palaces in successive tiers, backed up by the snow-covered summits of the



Viareggio. Looking into the Gulf of Spezia
(Showing the spot where Shelley's body was washed ashore).

To face p. 218







Alps, and "flinging its white arms" to its magnificent bay. Beyond was the curving coast-line, with headland rising beyond headland, each sheltering its populous town, and shrouded in luxuriant foliage.

Those towns and villages and hamlets have changed strangely in the last forty years. If the vettura has been nearly run off the road, the railway has been the making of the country. All the same, one gives many a sigh to the olden time. There is Spezia. Then its beautiful bay was as peaceful a solitude as when Shelley indulged his passion for yachting from Lerici. The Croce di Malta was a quiet and comfortable inn, chiefly patronised by passing foreigners. The principal merchandise was the coquettish toy hats, with which the girls besieged the door of the hotel. Now there is little inducement to loiter, for it is the arsenal and maritime workshop of Northern Italy, and that dream of Napoleon has been realised, which was baulked by the jealousy of Toulon.

From Genoa one made a fresh start, and it was a three days' drive to Nice, with halts at Oneglia and Savona. At San Remo, in the Guide-book published in 1842, Sir Francis Palgrave



praises the inn as clean and decent. When I stopped there first, there was but a single hotel of fair pretensions. Fashionable physicians have turned a Pactolus on to San Remo, but they have done even more for Mentone. In place of the "well-managed inn," as in Palgrave's time, there are a dozen or more of hotels, with endless boarding-houses and lodgings. I doubt the more whether the doctors had not gone on a wrong tack, now that cold-air cures have come into favour, for a more enervating atmosphere I never experienced. I passed a month at Mentone in early spring. I went there in rudest health, and in a month I had lost both legs and appetite, when a week's change to San Remo set me up. The eastern bay may be more bracing than the western, but there seemed little to choose between the two. Possibly, were the air more invigorating, Mentone would be less of the earthly paradise. For there, in the rugged picturesqueness of the Riviera, the exuberance of nature is running riot. It is about the only spot where you step at once from the town into the country. There are no darkening garden walls to shut in the stone-paved paths. You look down from the steepes into profound ravines, gilded with bright clusters of lemons and



An Old Street in Germany



An Old Street in Mentone.

To face p. 220





oranges. The figs are flourishing, with their broad green foliage, and the almonds overshadow irrigated gardens. But the olive is the tree of the place, and one can only speculate on the age of some of those secular patriarchs, with rifted trunks and gnarled roots that are inexhaustible studies for the artist. Between Genoa and Hyères I know no more enjoyable or diversified walk than that from Mentone up the valley to Gorbio, where you may rest under the spreading plane-tree on the village green; then down to Monte Carlo through the perpendicular street of Roccabruna, under narrow arches blocked with donkeys laden with dung to fertilise the soil they have carried up to the terraces. Monaco, the Gibraltar of the Cornice, is the capital of the smallest principality in Europe. The reigning sovereign, of the noble family of Grimaldi — which had another home in the Generalife confronting the Alhambra, and had been denied the rank of Spanish grandees because there was a suspicion of Jewish blood in the veins—like the old Scottish landowners, drew his revenues chiefly in kind, from six thousand industrious subjects. It was only lately that the palace on the beetling promontory had been made accessible for carriages. M. Blanc of Homburg changed all that, trans-

ferring his banking account from Frankfort to Nice when he was expelled from Germany. He established a southern Hell in the Paradise of the Cornice. His Italian palace, with its colonnades and gilded saloons, rose on a height open to the soft southern breezes, but sheltered from the mistral and the nipping north winds. Consumptives were tempted to superb hotels, and regaled in sumptuous restaurants. Never was there such a mixed multitude of aristocrats, plutocrats, adventurers out at elbows, and all the gambling rascality of Europe. He subsidised the prince, financed and policed the principality, and his staff of croupiers, quartered at Condamine, drove each morning in smart omnibuses to the receipt of custom. The great *artistes* of Europe were engaged for his concerts, and the music of his magnificent bands was seductive as the songs of the syrens. With luxurious accommodation in enchanting scenery, with gay society, and a perpetual round of amusements from play to pigeon-shooting, the oasis he had beautified was delectable when I knew it first. Morality apart, for you had always the sense that Satan was on the prowl, there was no more agreeable billet than the Hôtel Victoria. Its patrons were quiet

people, and its *clientèle* comparatively select. You could go for a long stretch of an afternoon, climbing rocks by goat-paths, losing yourself in thickets of aloe and arbutus, coming back pleasantly fatigued for the *table d'hôte*, and strolling down to the casino after dinner, where you were sure to come across unexpected acquaintances. But now those blissful days are gone, and the place has been ruined and vulgarised. The cliffs have been blasted, the copsewood cut away, and the unrivalled scenery defaced by the ravages of speculative cockneydom. Even the management of the traps for the unwary has deteriorated. At Homburg or Wiesbaden, when there was a dispute over stakes, the bank behaved with careless liberality, and generally satisfied both parties. Now the disputants are often left to scream it out, till there is another deal of the cards or the ball is set rolling again. And the most fashionable hotels are scarcely the places to which you would care to take a young wife for the honeymoon. Not only must you dine in mixed company in the restaurants—for neither in London or Paris is a lady bound to have a marriage certificate in her pocket—but there is such easy licence as used to prevail in Roumania before



Roumania became a reputable kingdom under the rule of a respectable Hohenzollern.

Nice is almost as completely transformed. Forty years ago there were straggling suburbs, but it was environed by country. The scented pine-woods overhung the town, with glades, winding paths, and *bosquets* enticing to lovers. In the spring, when the English most affected the place—it was to the English the Niçois were indebted for their Promenade Anglaise—in each sheltered glen there were beds of violets, and each southern slope was blazing with flames of scarlet anemones. Since then the builder has broken loose, enclosure has been proceeding apace, and the Cimiez and the Montboron have been traversed by garden walls, and desecrated by every variety of eccentric architecture. Nowhere is there a more striking illustration of the epigram: “God made the country, but man made the town,” and if the building boom was followed by the inevitable collapse, that is poor consolation. Now the lover of nature scarcely cares to rest on his passage, and, to my mind, the chief attraction of Nice, as it is now, is the Place Masséna, with the most attractive display in Europe of the wares of confectioners and flower-merchants.

One memorable week we passed in Nice, while



our vettura was laid up in ordinary, and we were well content to pay for the delay. Day after day, from the windows of the Hôtel des Anglaisé, we looked out on the flower of the French armies filing forward, in martial pomp, on the crusade for the liberation of Italy. Household troops, lancers, hussars, heavy dragoons, Zouaves, regiments of the line, passed slowly in succession. The excitable Niçois were in the seventh heaven ; they cheered to the echo even the bestial-looking Turkos, who cast longing eyes at the ladies and the dazzling shop-fronts. The Emperor of France had gone to war for an idea, and the jubilant citizens little foresaw the day when, under a forced plebiscite, they would transfer their allegiance, and when their compatriot Garibaldi, whom they idolised, would make a futile attempt at a rescue. Laurence Oliphant, who was with him, has described that ridiculous fiasco.

As I said, I was once shipwrecked on the voyage from Marseilles to Leghorn, and that was my first acquaintance with Cannes. We put into Antibes, and while a message was sent to Marseilles for another steamer, we made up a party, chartered vehicles, and drove across. It was significant that, though in our carriage there was a Queen's Messenger, a Queen's Counsel, and an *attaché* to the

Tuscan legation, no one of us had ever halted at Cannes, or knew anything of the hotels. Indeed, at that time there was no great choice. Like most of the other towns of the Riviera, there was little besides back lanes and the one long main street, the posting road from Antibes to Frejus. Lord Brougham, who died and was buried there, had built the Villa Eleonore, and the residences of some of his countrymen who followed his lead had been springing up here and there. Not even his versatile lordship, with all his sagacity, foresaw the future that lay in his discovery. A score of years later, when I called again at the Villa Eleonore, the beautiful gardens had been woefully circumscribed. When ground plots were going up to fancy values, in common prudence his lordship's heirs could not have resisted the temptation to sell or lease. We all know what Cannes is now. It stretches along miles of curving beach, basking in the sunshine. Half England emigrates thither in the winter, and fashionable doctors from West-end London shepherd their patients in flocks. After extending, like all resorts of fashion, to the westward, a new quarter was found to the east in the Californie, where the scented air was weighed and analysed, and pronounced specially favourable



As shown in

Figure 1, the



Hyères from "Les Salins."

To face p. 226





1



IX.] THE VIEWS FROM CANNES 227

to pulmonary complaints. When the Californie became overcrowded—for at Cannes, as at Torquay, the affluent visitors made large enclosures round luxurious villas—the axes were laid to the pine-woods beyond, and builders, as at pine-shadowed Bournemouth, have been striking at the roots of prosperity. Nothing can rob Cannes of the enchanting views, wherever you can struggle out on some commanding point of vantage. The walk which circles the hill above, with its rare succession of panoramic marine beauties resembles, and so far as I remember, is only surpassed by that where you have to pick your steps on the stone margin of the water-channels on the mountain amphitheatre which backs up Malaga. To the westward is the serrated range of the Esterel, and seaward, swimming in the sunshine, are the Isles of the Lerins, where St Mars mounted guard over the Man of the Iron Mask, where D'Artagnan had a most unexpected and unwelcome *rencontre* with his friends the Count de la Fère and Raoul de Bragelonne, and whence the bulky Bazaine made his moonlight flitting, either down the rope-ladder or through unguarded doors. But now at Cannes, even more than behind Nice, the old walks are circumscribed in all directions, and the rambler is

brought up by peremptory warnings against trespass, and the more serious obstacles of stone walls and barbed wire. On a recent visit, returning from an afternoon walk from the Cannet to the Grand Hotel, where I was to dress and drive out for dinner, I took a short cut by a well-remembered path through a wood to the Hôtel de Provence. I meant to make the most of short time, and call there on some ladies. Instead of crossing the open, as I expected, I was landed before the high garden wall of the hotel. It was covered with fruit trees, and rather than make a tremendous detour, I scaled the wall by aid of the espaliers, and came down on the other side with garments sadly dilapidated. After a dusty walk, I looked disreputable enough in any case. I explained, and the ladies laughed, and so far all was well. But that is the nuisance of the new mania for enclosing, which embarrasses the pedestrian stroller at every turn.

Now Cannes is given over to "carriage company," and I would advise no invalid to go there who cannot afford a landau or barouche. Closing it, or putting up the back is an indispensable protection against the searching winds springing up towards evening and sweeping down from the hills. A vehicle of some sort is still more necessary for

those who are caught up in the vortex of gaiety. Cannes is a most aggravating place to the bachelor bird of passage with many friends. Nowhere is free hospitality more expensive. If he is wise, he will take up a central position. The Grand Hotel is as comfortable as any of the caravanserais, and airy; you might stable the horses of a cavalry troop in each of the spacious and lofty corridors; yet I only abandoned the quieter Gray et d'Albion for it when I had been driven out one sultry spring by the midges that multiplied round the fountain in the garden. But whether at the one or the other, time is sadly cut up, and carriage hire comes dear when you lunch at the Frejus end, dine in the Californie, and scale the heights for dance and supper, given somewhere among the Maritime Alps.

Those who have the salamander temperament, and love the *dolce far niente*, might do worse than build a villa in an eligible situation, let it through the season, and live in it for the rest of the year. The more imposing the villa, the more certain the returns. The late Chevalier Colquhoun—he was a sort of father of the place, in which he took a parental pride—used to say that his countrymen took flight just when it became really enjoyable.

He revelled in the beautiful gardens he had laid out, and I remember one day his pointing to a border which was a fragrant blaze of colour, and saying that, if he planted his bamboo there it would blossom like Aaron's rod. That especial day is marked in my memory, because it was the last time I saw the Duke of Albany. The Cercle Nautique gave an entertainment that evening in his honour, and I can see his Royal Highness now, the soul of affability and kindly geniality, the pallor of his refined face lighted up with smiles, and the wealth of sparkling gems in his rings drawing attention to the somewhat fragile fingers.

CHAPTER X

THE CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY

DESCENDING one of the Alpine passes in the *diligence*, with fast-locked wheels and the heavy *sabot*, turning the sharp corners, looking down on roaring torrents in the depths of abysses, leaving behind the chilly air of the eternal snows, bridging the rifts torn in the mountain flanks by avalanche and landslide, emerging from dark tunnels upon glorious glimpses of landscape, lost the next moment as you passed under some darksome gallery, you realised how the Milanese had in the Middle Ages, like the Low Countries of later times, been the cockpit of Europe. You could imagine the feeling with which the barbarians of the North, breaking out of their frozen swamps and forests, poured down upon that land of peace and plenty. You could understand how fiercely its riches were contested by France, Spain, and the Empire, by Hapsburg, Valois, and Bourbon. The wealth



282 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

of mediæval Italy is something of a marvel and mystery. Continually subject to foreign invasion, perpetually distracted by domestic feuds, ravaged by the Free Companies, the Black Bands, and by mercenaries who were always changing their masters, still there were high state and lavish luxury at a score of petty courts, and republics were enriched from other sources than the commerce that made the fortunes of Venice and Genoa. The first glance over the Lombard plains from the Alps goes some little way towards solving the puzzle. Perhaps the contrast with Swiss ruggedness and Alpine desolation deepens the impression, but you felt you were descending on a land of inestimable promise. Already in the spring, a soil of virgin fertility, which centuries of cultivation have been unable to exhaust, was blazing under genial warmth, almost oppressively sultry at noon. You had caught distant glimpses of the lakes flashing and sparkling in the sunshine. When you came down on their banks you met breaths of balmy air, and the changes in the scenery responded to the rapid rise in the temperature. The upper end of Como, for example, when you have cleared a depressing flat, is set in a frame of barren and forbidding mountains. The lower lake is soft and sensuous, and almost tropical



in its vegetation. Between the blue of the skies and the deep azure of the lake, it was like steaming over a sheet of water in a gigantic hothouse, in air almost oppressively laden with the odours of shrubs and flowers. Bellagio is a very Eden on earth for lazy lovers of tropical temperament. More energetic folk may find the atmosphere enervating: the active pedestrian is caged, and baulked in his outgoings, and has to fall back upon boating. But after a course of Swiss walking, I can recall nothing more delightful in late summer than the stay at Baveno on Maggiore. Behind there were hill-walks in any number, with shady paths diverging from the vineyards through oak and chestnut forests, with surprises in the shape of lonely chapels or shrines, frequented in seasons of pilgrimage, with the quaintly frescoed stations, delineating the stages of the Passion. You came across no one but some solitary goat-herd, or a couple of carabinieri, supposed to be on the outlook for brigands; though brigands could have got but a lean living there, as the plain was efficiently policed and guarded. Next day, if your legs felt somewhat stiff, it was an enjoyable change to bargain for a boat, and be rowed over tranquil water through transparent heat-haze to the islands.

284 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

Hypercritical æsthetes might abuse the bad taste of the terraced gardens of the Isola Bella. Assuredly, with its rococo grottoes, its fantastic statuary, and its mosaics, like Prince Butero's palace in the Concha d'Oro of Palermo, it rather reminded one of Rosherville—"the place to spend a happy day," as the advertisements used to be worded. All the same, when you stepped ashore, you were transported into the Arabian Nights and the gardens of a Haroun Al Raschid. What a contrast from the narcissi, the euphorbias and hardy wild-flowers of the peaks you had trodden the day before; from the stunted oaks and the blasted pine trees to those tropical growths on the many-storied terraces; to the rank exuberance of scented shrubbery and the dense thickets of azalea, almonds and oranges. Sultry as the day might be, there was always cool shade under umbrageous, flowering trees, with such a verdure of emerald turf as is seldom seen in Italy. For everywhere in your ears was the sound of water, the ripple of artificial rills, and the murmur of fountains, mingled with the hum of the bees over beds of heliotrope, and the ceaseless chirp of crickets and grasshoppers. Those islands of the blest seemed to have been beautified without

human hands, for you seldom saw a gardener, and when you left your boat and the boatmen to their siesta, you might dream and muse to your heart's content. If you wanted stimulants and a tonic, you had only to emerge from the copses of exotics on the carpeting of sprouting ferns, and inhale the breezes from the opposite heights, where cascades were tumbling from green meadows through stony clefts, or overhanging pastures enamelled with flowers. And to come down from the poetical to the prosaic, there was capital living at that inn of Baveno. The landlord used personally to superintend the kitchen, and you had a foretaste of the best Italian cookery in its simpler forms. He was a master in the art of manipulating macaroni; his ortolans in vine-leaves were a *plat* to linger in the memory, and he prided himself with reason on his *pâtisserie*. We were excellent friends, but I used to insult him by telling him there was nothing I liked better in his house than a luncheon of brown rolls and Strachino cheese, with a bottle of the foaming Asti.

And so, from Como or Baveno to Milan, the riches of Lombardy unrolled themselves. Everywhere was an abundance and superabundance of water, fertilising the deep soil, which would have

236 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

been otherwise baked into a brickfield by the burning sun. Far as the eye could reach over slightly-rolling eminences, offering sunny southern slopes, was an unbroken expanse of waving wheat-fields, of trellised vineyards trailing from bough to bough, as described in the "Georgics," and of bushy mulberry trees, with an occasional clump of oaks or sheltering line of poplars. From time immemorial there had been a perfect system of irrigation: wheat, silk and wine were the staples of Lombardy, and, political considerations apart, no wonder the Austrians tenaciously clung to it.

I suspect that many a Lombard farmer or peasant has regretfully remembered their rule. Though their Italian possessions were continually in a state of siege, and they repressed disturbances with an iron hand, their yoke was comparatively easy and their burden relatively light. From all I used to hear in Milan in those days, I believe they were far from unpopular with the lower orders, and Milan was more easily managed than Venice. Undoubtedly, and as much as at Venice, they were detested by the Italian nobles and the commercial classes. But the soldiers were under severe discipline, and the officers had strict orders to avoid duels. Many of the crack regiments were



The University of Michigan

The University of Michigan

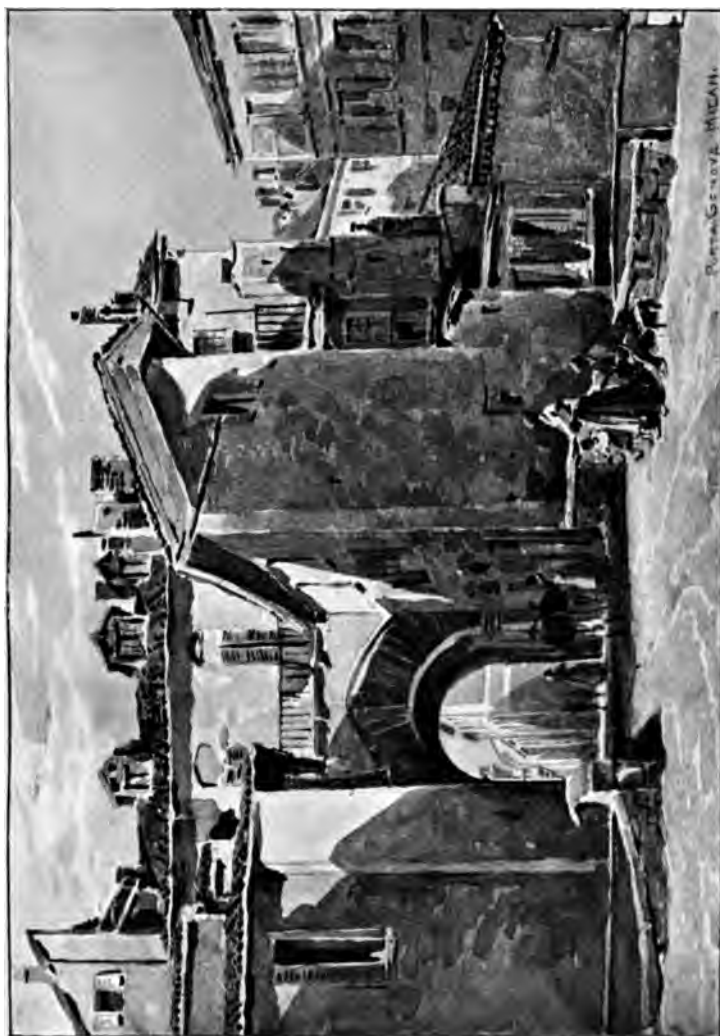


5

The Porta di Genova—Milan.

To face p. 285





PORTA NUOVA MILAN.



238 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

delight in melody. I remember that specially impressed me at Verona, a gloomy city, with sombre streets paved with cobble-stones, and dark alleys odoriferous with unspeakable filth. The sight-seeing of the morning had been rather a dreary business; the amphitheatre and the many monuments of remote antiquity, the tombs of the Scaligers, the memories of Dante eating the bitter bread of the exile, and of that unhappy love affair of Romeo and Juliet were not specially enlivening. I came back to the early *table d'hôte* at the inn, and the long and indifferently-lighted *salon* was not out of keeping with a town that had the air of a charnel-house. But the upper half of the long table was reserved; there came the clash of spurs and the clank of sabres on the stone staircase. With the rush of jovial hussars, you were in a cheery military mess. A white-haired colonel took the chair, and was the most hilarious of the company. The regimental band was playing a light selection below the windows; the civilians who dropped in to dine brightened up, and yielded to the influence, and for once I saw Italians on sociable terms with the foreigners.

Florence was the brightest of Italian cities, Naples not excepted. The city of the factions and

x.] FLORENCE OF GRAND DUKES 239

street fights, the birth-place of the Renaissance, and the centre of light and leading under the Medicis, was lively as ever five-and-forty years ago, and intellectual to boot. When the rest of Italy was groaning under foreign rule, under the abuses of the Papal *régime* and the brutalities of the Neapolitan Bourbons, Florence was flourishing under the beneficent rule of its Grand Dukes. Always volatile and prone to *émeutes* and revolution, the Florentines welcomed the annexation to Piedmont, though they had sent few soldiers into the battle-field. In 1860 I happened to drive into Florence on the very day when the fall of the dynasty was finally recognised. Our carriage crossed the Piazza della Signoria when the workmen were taking down the Grand Ducal arms from the façade of the Uffizi Palace. Recognising our nationality, they turned to grin and wave their hands, in assurance of English sympathy with their liberation. In the evening there were fireworks in the Cascine, and the lights of a brilliant illumination were flashed back from the bosom of the Arno. Well, the Florentines have had their will; they have seen their city crowned the capital, and then abandoned; and perhaps, like the Milanese, the

240 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

have come to realise that they have changed King Log for King Stork. They were always liberally inclined, and they are still tolerably loyal, but the taxation has increased six-fold since they sent Leopold II. on his travels. He had ample private revenues, and spent them freely, and nothing could be pleasanter than his cultured little court, where all were welcomed who came decently introduced.

The Florence of those days was a city of quiet gaiety, a museum of antiquity that had scarcely been tampered with, and an unsullied dream of beauty. Its charms had inspired the English poets from Milton to Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Everywhere you came on the monuments of mediævalism blending and contrasting with the signs of modern progress. There were the palaces which were the strongholds of the great nobles, when in their fortified quarters they shared the city among them, as the Barons of the Campagna in mediæval Rome. Luca Pitti, in especial, seems to have built for eternity, with masses of rugged stone, stupendous as the blocks of the pyramids. Hard by, the Porta Santa Maria, leading to the unique Ponte Vecchio, glittered with the show of the shops in the Palais Royal, but with treasures



10/10/10 10:10:10
10/10/10 10:10:10



- The Mercato Vecchio--Florence
(now destroyed).

To face p. 240





of age and price in place of tinsel and trumpery. Charles Lever hit it off happily in his "Daltons," and no man knew Florence better. I have seen him there, by the way, when he dropped in daily at Donay's, when he loved to get up a little dinner at the Luna, and when heading his *cortège* of children in the Cascine, in scarlet habits and mounted on piebald or cream-coloured ponies, he used to draw the eyes of all, as he liked to do, and was often mistaken for a circus master. In the "Daltons" he talks of "the little low shops, all glittering with gold and gems—the gorgeous tiaras of diamonds—the richly-enamelled cups and vases aside of the grotesque articles of peasant costume . . . the strings of Oriental pearls, all thrown about in a rich profusion."

Florence, though light of heart, was not what could be called a lightsome city. Anciently it had been crowded within its walls, and like all southern towns the object was to exclude the sunshine from the narrow streets, with their obtruding upper stories and projecting eaves. It was the more exhilarating to emerge on the breezy Lung d'Arno, or on the bustling piazzas. What memories were evoked in the Piazza della Signoria, picturesque as the Grande Place of Brussels, and

which had witnessed still more sinister tragedies ! Under the Loggia dei Lanzi were the masterpieces of the sculptors from Benvenuto Cellini to Canova, all "standing naked in the open air," like those that adorned the groves of Blarney. There was the Piazza di Santa Croce, before the Valhalla of Italian immortals — Dante, Galileo, Michel Angelo, Machiavelli, Alfieri, and many another. Yet looking down on what some one then styled "the smokeless city" from the heights of Fiesole—where, by the way, you could buy the style of baron for a few score of florins—everywhere you saw the grey of the buildings relieved by the dark foliage of oak and cypress. Then it was framed in a setting of terraced olive gardens, of gleaming white balustrades, of marble fountains and of sculptured figures, which had a marvellously attractive effect in the distance, though they may have been surpassed by the Perseus and the David of the Loggia dei Lanzi.

These summer residences wore the signs of abounding prosperity. The lands of the nobles were lightly taxed, and the Grand Duke, if he kept open house, set no example of prodigality. But Florence had been the cradle of successful banking and speculative finance, and the three

x.] FLORENTINE PROSPERITY 248

balls of the magnificent Medicis are still the signs of the pawnbrokers. The Buondelmonti, the leaders in many a bloody street broil, amassed their enormous riches by fortunate loans. In Corsica they became the Buonapartes who gave birth to Napoleon, and Napoleon might have rivalled the Rothschilds had he turned his genius to money-broking. Wages were good, and living was cheap. The artistic artisan was much in demand, with the jewellery and mosaic workers of the Ponte Vecchio. In no capital, perhaps, could a foreign bachelor so happily combine comfort with economy if he went into apartments. I always put up at the Hôtel d'Arno, where the charges were far from extortionate. But if I went of a morning to the Café Donay, the fashionable restaurant, as I often did, I could breakfast for half the money. Donay's was famous for ices and for coffee; in the latter respect it has lamentably fallen off in these latter days. In the afternoons it was crowded, to be deserted when the gay world was driving down the Via Tornabuoni and setting its face towards the Cascine. In the *giro* of carriages and riders there you saw simply everybody; you flirted and gossiped and made arrangements for the evening, to the songs of the nightingales, amid



To face p. 241

The Ponte Vecchio—Florence.







x] SURVIVAL OF MIDDLE AGES 245

"restoration" of the venerable Gothic front of Santa Croce. Yet, to use an expressive phrase, the Florentines have always kept a stiff upper lip, and what specially struck a shrewd American observer was that they still dressed as they used to do, and they had always dressed well. It is to be suspected that, like the Neapolitans, who sun themselves on the Chiaia, if the fashionables make a fair show abroad, they must pinch at home. There is still one survival of mediæval manners which links the present with the past of Lorenzo and Savonarola. The masked brothers of the Misericordia still go their nightly rounds, bearing the bier to the cemetery, chanting solemn requiems, and illuminating street and alley with the flare of their smoking torches. But in New Florence, as in Paris, the naming or re-naming of the streets are indicative of revolution and political change, and as you can whistle up a cab or take a tramcar in the Piazza della Signoria, so you drive along the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, the Via Garibaldi, and the Via Cavour.

Pisa and Padua, stagnating in their social backwaters, are still dead-alive as the stranded cities of the Zuyder Zee. In Pisa I remember the difficulty of getting a circular note cashed at the

246 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

banker's, when the chief had prolonged his siesta, giving orders not to be disturbed, and when his clerk had apparently taken an indefinite furlough, leaving only the house-porter in charge. It seemed as if the city had been sleeping for centuries. To the English stranger it was haunted by the memories of Byron and Shelley, Trelawney and Leigh Hunt. Going literally a little further afield, carried back by the recollections of the glorious past of the trading and fighting republic, you breathed the air of the charnel-house in the unrivalled group of ecclesiastical monuments. The leaning tower seemed to symbolise the maritime rival of Genoa tottering towards its fall. In the cloisters of the Campo Santo, on the sacred soil brought as ballast from the Holy Land on the galleys, were Orcagna's ghastly and ghostly frescoes of Hell, Death, and Corruption. Like Melrose, it was a scene to be visited by moonlight, and the least impressionable of mortals could not resist the influences of that haunted, suburban solitude. You felt almost sacrilegious as you sat and smoked a cigar on the steps of the Baptistry in the flooding brilliance of an Italian moon; and the croaking of the frogs in the Campo Santo was a more



x.] PADUA OF THE BLACK ART 247

appropriate symphony than the song of the nightingales that enlivened the Cascine of Florence.

I was never tempted to linger in Padua. The oldest of the cities of Northern Italy, the seat of one of the most famous of mediæval universities, had still a depressing atmosphere of academic gloom, and suggested a vast convent abandoned by the monks, with its buildings like Pietro Cozzo's palace in the market-place—solid structures as the giant cities of Bashan, but superficially fallen out of repair. Everywhere, for those who cared to seek for them, were the traces and relics of illustrious men—of great scholars and churchmen, of sculptors and painters. With the *loggie* and dark rows of arches supporting the houses, even in its palmy days Padua must have worn a sepulchral aspect, and was a congenial resort for the professors of the Black Art, who held converse with the powers of Evil, at once their masters and their slaves. I own that the greatest attraction was the Café Pedrocchi, for in its decay and in the middle of the 19th century, Padua boasted the most renowned and the most palatial of those essentially Italian establishments. It had risen on the ruins of a Roman edifice, and may have eclipsed the splendours of the palace it

had replaced. Nowhere else could you spend two or three coppers on coffee or iced lemonade in Arabesque halls that suggested the wonders of the Arabian Nights; and Pedrocchi, who made a fortune—no one knows exactly how—has left a name to go down to posterity with that of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

From Padua to Venice was but a stride, skimming over land and lagoon. It was pleasant to break the journey at Padua, for if you travelled from Lombardy without a halt, the line was one of the hottest, the dustiest, and the chalkiest in Europe. You were always aggravating an unquenchable thirst with iced glasses of all manner of seductive innocent drinks. It was a delightful relief to emerge on the lagoons, and inhale the breezes from the Adriatic. The Dogana used to give a deal of bother, for there were heavy custom exactions on the frontier, and there was searching scrutiny at the Venetian *octroi*. But there were no steam-launches in waiting at the station; you stepped into a gondola, and were at once in Old Venice. The black, hearse-like covering of the gondola was mournfully significant, and it was a marvel that the Austrians did not suppress it. Milan was wealthy, and Florence both affluent



and gay; but Venice was poverty-stricken, and veritably a city of mourning. "Silent rowed the tuneless gondolier," and the melancholy of his warning cry of "Stali, Prené!" as he shaved each sharp turn, was harmonious as the moan of the screech-owl in some shattered abbey. And when I first saw the city it was in the height of a cholera epidemic, when most of the well-to-do citizens had fled, and when death was busy in the poorer quarters. I put up then at the Hôtel de l'Europe on the Grand Canal—a capital house, with an ephemeral existence. My bedroom was on the ground floor; there was not a strip of ledge between wall and water, and in the nights of a sultry July, of course, I slept with the windows open. In the heat it would have been hard to sleep soundly in any case, and constantly I was roused by the plash of the oar. If you rose to look out you saw no *cortège*; in a single gondola, or with a couple at most, the corpse was being carried to the burial.

In these circumstances, perhaps from the romantic point of view, you saw Venice as Venice was to the best advantage. Then the factitious gaiety—the rouge on the pallid cheeks of the moribund—had disappeared. The Austrians, who spent money freely in happier times, went about

250 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

their military duties gravely, and though the bands still played of an afternoon in the Place of St Mark, they played to the officers, the waiters and the pigeons.

But at no time under Austrian rule was Venice contented, or even resigned. The foreign yoke pressed upon it with exceptional rigour. Milan, Florence and Verona drew their wealth from the rich lands of Lombardy and Tuscany. Trade flourished there, and could afford to pay the moderate taxes. Venice had thriven by commerce, and now the commerce was dead. The bar was silting up; the capacious harbour was shipless; Trieste, favoured by Government, had drained away the trade. I said that most of the well-to-do had fled, but the majority of the middle classes struggled on from hand to mouth, and could not afford to go. Taine, who looked closely into matters, gave some suggestive figures; he says that the desponding people had ceased to work; that of 120,000 inhabitants, a third were on the pauper roll. The taxes were crushing. A house with a rental of 1000 florins paid a tax of 400. In general, real estate was rated at a third of its receipts. Most oppressive and unjust of all was the income-tax. The merchant paid the esti-

Figure 1



Figure 1. Aerial view of the river and bridge.

A Street Scene in Venice.

To face p. 250







mated twentieth of his profits ; his *employés* the twentieth of their salaries. The estimated gains might prove a loss, but he was mulcted in advance, and could not recover. If he had underestimated, he incurred a heavy penalty, and he was beset by spies and informers, who were rewarded on his conviction. It is difficult, indeed, to explain the exceptional severity of the Austrian dealings with Venice ; for elsewhere they adjusted the burden to the back, and soothed the patriotic susceptibilities of their Italian subjects, if they did not conciliate their affections. For the resentful animosity of the Venetians of all classes was the result and not the cause of that grievous oppression.

As to that sullen animosity there could be no mistake. When I was there with the cholera, all the theatres were closed ; but in ordinary times, in the city of Goldoni, the drama had been dying, like everything else. In the Milan of Radetzsky, as in Florence of the Grand Dukes, many theatres were overcrowded every evening. In Venice all the leading houses were closed, and notably the famous Fenice. The manager might have filled galleries and pit, but his company must have played to empty boxes. In Milan and Naples, poor nobles pinched at home that they might hire

252 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

a box or stall at the Scala or the San Carlo. Any noble Venetian would have been sent to Coventry who showed his face at the theatre. In that city of stagnant waters and stifling back slums it was not in human nature to shun the Place of St Mark's on a summer evening, though the detested foreigner furnished the music. Florian's and the other cafés overflowed on to the pavement. But Austrians and Italians kept jealously apart, resigned to biting their gloves, because duelling was forbidden, but scowling across the way in impotent anger.

Thanks to the indefatigable brush of Canaletti, every gallery in Europe presents us with panoramas of the Queen of the Adriatic. To Englishmen the dome of Santa Maria della Salute is familiar as that of St Paul's, and they know the Riva Schiavoni as well as the Thames Embankment. But the sea-borne city must be seen that we may realise the splendour of her past. In Amsterdam, as in Venice, untold sums have been sunk to secure a foundation; that was a work of necessity. But in utilitarian Amsterdam the superstructures are of brick; in Venice everything is of marble, brought from a distance, regardless of cost. Palaces, churches, bridges were of marble, and in the floating city,



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Santa Maria della Salute and the Dogana—Venice.

To face p. 252







1



2]- VENETIAN ARCHITECTURE 258

moored on the lagoons, the architecture is everlasting as the Coliseum or the Pyramids. Palaces and public buildings are adorned and embroidered with an exuberant wealth of carving, with colonnades, balconies, gilded cornices, and frettings of fantastic Oriental lacework. As in the rock temples of Petra, there is the flush of colours, and the sobriety of grey and white is relieved by porphyry and serpentine and rose-coloured blocks, flashing back the sunbeams. The Place of St Mark, where the Byzantine blends with the Gothic, with its domes, minarets, and Saracenic arabesques is a glittering show of jewellery *en suite*, where the cathedral church with its mosaics, its marble columns, and its bas-reliefs, is the central and most lustrous gem. It is a museum of trophies won by the republic in war and trade; a Pantheon of memories rather than of tombs and monuments, for, unlike Santa Croce of Florence, few of the great lie buried there. It is only the chief among many churches, which if not so absolutely unique, are scarcely less gorgeous. The Campanile is gone, seen from afar as a landmark by seamen being piloted through channels and shoals—it is rising again from its ruins—but great as was the fall, and heavy the loss, a single edifice is scarcely to be missed where there are so

254 CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY [CHAP.

many to marvel at. The Grand Canal, winding in a graceful beauty line, like one of those sinuous sea-channels, is a waterway, without a vestige of side pavement, between historical palaces. The Foscari, the Balbi, the Grimaldi, the Mocrenigo—each has its deathless name, commemorating some race of warriors and statesmen, who traded wholesale in the wares of the world, and glorified commerce in the age of chivalry. They annexed kingdoms, colonised barbarous islands, constructed commodious harbours, financed fighting kings and adventurers on usurious terms, and, when occasion offered, never missed the chance of making profitable “corners” in silks and spices. The whole story of Venice is a romance of marvels or miracles. She sunk her foundations in malarious lagoons. She traded in piracy in an unprecedented fashion, for she seized upon territories in place of ships. She based the most stable of constitutions on tyranny, oppression and suspicion. She made ostentatious display of her vast wealth, and flaunted her luxury in the face of rapacious and warlike neighbours; she trusted her defence to the arms of mercenaries; yet through all the vicissitudes of European countries, through the incursions of the Eastern and Northern barbarians, through the wars of the Middle Ages,

2.] THE DAYS OF DISSIPATION 255

through the strife of the Emperors with the French for the dominion of Italy, the little state still treated on equal terms with Pontiffs, Kings, and Kaisers, and the corrupt oligarchy maintained its independence till Napoleon remodelled the map of Europe.

By the law of retribution, the Venetians have been expiating the sins and follies of their fathers. In the days of its decadence, fallen from power, Venice was wealthy still, and the most voluptuous and licentious of cities. The scandalous memoirs of Casanova, those of Goldoni, and the travels of President de Broues, are as true to the life as the paintings of Canaletti. With as many churches in proportion to the population as Rome itself, the Venetians were Pagan and Epicurean as the Florentines of the Renaissance. The city was wholly given over to gaiety and dissipation. There was banqueting with the blaze of costumes and the glitter of golden plate, as we see it in the paintings of Paul Veronese and Tintoretto. The marriage vows were made only to be laughed at, and such troops of courtesans as followed the armies of Wallenstein or Tilly were crowded nightly together under the colonnades of St Mark. The carnival lasted for half the year. The mask, the



xi.] THE RAIN OF INDULGENCES 295

scrambled for, one was inclined to envy the superstition and credulity which had found peace and assurance of salvation in the bosom of an infallible Church. The brigand or the bravo could make a fresh professional start with an easy conscience if he secured one of those inestimable documents, knowing that his celestial papers were strictly *en règle*.

in pink and white blossoms. But beyond there was still a long sweep of beach, solitary and silent, except for the cries of the sea-fowl. Another souvenir of the former solitude was the graveyard of the Jews, to which the bodies of the accursed race had been hurried ignominiously from their ghetto. The site was strangely appropriate to the fate of the chosen people, who scorned the promises and invoked the curse. It may have suggested to Byron the most pathetic of the "Hebrew Melodies." When I stumbled on it unexpectedly, I was reminded of another resting-place of the Hebrew outcasts, even more romantically situated, though the surroundings are very different. Riding over the downs from the Sweet Waters of Europe to Pera, you exchanged the light canter over the springy turf for an unfenced collection of slippery paving-stones. When you looked at the fresher of them, you saw they were mossy grave slabs, inscribed with Oriental characters. Elsewhere, and away from that beach, there was nothing but life on the Lido. Little steamers, overcrowded as penny boats on the Thames, were plying at short intervals from the Riva dei Schiavoni; tables were at a premium in the verandahs of the cafés and *osterias*; minstrels, puppet shows, and mendicants

INDEX

415

Cotton, Sergeant, 29
 Coutts, Messrs, 39
 Cozzo, Pietro, his palace at Padua, 247
 Cry, Haut de, ascent of, 173
 Currency question, 49
 Customs, 43; attempts to defraud, 44, 45, 383; at Civita Vecchia, 262; Spain, 383

D

DACHSHUNDS, 180
 Danube, the, 123, 186
 Darmstadt, 84
 Darro, the, 405
 Dasent, Sir George, "Jest and Earnest," 112
 Daudet, Alphonse, 133; his "Nabab," 358
 Davos, 116
 Davy, Sir Humphrey, 121
 Dennistoun, Mr, 219
 Dent du Midi, 154
 Devil's Bridge, 168
Diligence, travelling by, in Spain, 386; in Switzerland, 140
 Dinan, 335
 Disgrazia, Monte della, ascent of, 170
 Doche, Madame, 375
 Dogs of St Bernard, sagacity, 163; prices, 164
 Douarnes, shell-fish of, 351
 Dover, Lord Warden, library, 130
 Doyle, "Brown, Jones and Robinson," 175
 Drachenfels, the, 67, 68
 Dreher, his brewery, 191
 Dresden, 195; attractions, 196; picture gallery, 196; *Schutzhammer*, 196; opera-house, 196; Whitsun-week holiday, 197
 Duchâtel, Tanneguy, 346
 Dumas, Alexander, 263, 274, 334,

352; "Impressions de Voyage," 61, 134, 173; on the conversions of St Goar, 82; his story of Prince Metternich, 83; cost of his books, 133; his romances, 133; character of his writings, 134; his story of Beaute, 151; on the birth-place of Goethe, 177; his sketch of Pastrini, 285; on the lazzaroni of Naples, 301; on the poverty of the Neapolitans, 305
 Dumas, his *La Dame aux Camelias*, 375
 Dürer, Albert, 198, 202
 Düsseldorf, 58
 Dutch inns, 7; frugality, 11; industry, 13; qualities, 17
 Duval, his cheap restaurants, 368

E

EAGLE'S NEST, 172
 Earthquakes, shocks of, 156, 157
 Eastbourne, Grand Hotel, library in the, 130
 Ebel, 144
 Eber, General, on tipping in Vienna, 190
 Ebro, eels from the, 381
 Ehrenbreitstein, 74
 Elbe, the, 196
 Eltville, 85
 Ems, 74, 76
 Engadine, 116, 167
 Engelberg, 116
 Engelhardt, his discovery of Zermatt, 159
 Enkhuizen, 19
 Enz, trout fishing, 113
 Eothen, 275, 395
 Esterel, range of the, 227
 Estramadura, hams of, 381
 Etna, 321, 333
 Europe, tour of, preparations for a, 39



CHAPTER XI

OLDER ROME

THE Dome of St Peter's is a landmark in the memory. It dominates everything in the environs of Rome, like the roof of Cologne Cathedral rising over the Rhine plain; like the spire of Strasburg soaring over the flats stretching beneath the Bergstrasse; like "King Ida's Castle," which breaks the horizon from each height in eastern Northumbria. But St Peter's has a sacred and significant attraction of its own, for it is the symbol of the strange triumph of the Cross, of the rise of the Popes on the fall of the Cæsars. You had seen the Dome in your dreams, and in many a painting and engraving. Doubtless, when it dawned on the corporeal vision, the most impressive approach was from Civita Castellana, when rolling southward in the *calèche* or in the lumbering *diligence*, the giant proportions gradually grew on you, and you slowly realised the colossal bulk. The Pyramids would seem a

INDEX

417

- Gérard, Jules, 44
 Germany, character of the
 bankers, 49; scarcity of gold,
 50; the heavy coinage, 52;
 baths, 88; gambling tables, 88;
 books in, 124, 127; novels of,
 128
 — Emperor William of, his
 triumphal entry into Berlin,
 182
 Gibraltar, ride to, 396; arrival
 at, 398; the garrison mess, 399;
 sport, 400
 Gibson, his studio in Rome, 280;
 pupils, 281, 282
 Gingolph, St, 154
 Girardin, Madame Emile de, her
 comedies, 375
 Girenti, giant temples of, 332
 Gmunden, 121
 Goar, St, 69
 Goarhausen, 82
 Goethe, birth-place of, 177
 Gold, scarcity of, in Germany,
 50
 Goldoni, memoirs of, 255
 Gonda, 167
 Goodwin, Mr, consul at Palermo,
 323
 Gorbio, 221
 Gossett, Mr, his ascent of the
 Haut de Cry, 173
 Gothard, St, 167
 Graham, in Spain, 386, 396
 Grammont, Duc de, 278
 Granada, 118, 404; visit to, 404;
 the opera, 405
 Grebert, Herr, his hotel the Allée
 Saal, 106
 Grimaldi, the, 221, 254
 Grindelwald, 171, 172
 Grisons, the, 167
 Guadalquivir, valley of the, 393
 Gueldres marshes, 13
 Guides of Switzerland, 158;
 rules, 158, 173; cost, 158;
 patois, 172; character, 172;
 reputation, 173
 Gustavus Adolphus, 204
- H
- HAARLEM, inns, 7; improve-
 ments, 15
 Hague, the, 6
 Haldimand, M., 153
 Hals, Franz, 10
 Halsberg, Rudolph of, 55
 Hapsburgs, the, 174
 Hardy, the King of the Riffel,
 160
 Hare, Augustus, on Venice, 256
 Harlingen, 9
 Harwich, 5, 12
 Hauser, Herr, 130
 Hausmann, Baron, 376
 Hawkshaw, Sir John, 11
 Hay, Drummond, 402
 Hayward, his "Art of Dining," 365
 Head, Sir Francis, his book on
 the Brünnen of Nassau, 103,
 108; on the colour of the
 waters at Schwalbach, 110
 Heine, his "Reisebilder," 128
 Heisterbach, ruins of, 68
 Helst, Van der, 8, 10
 Herbesthal, 41
Herzog von Nassau, 69
 Hesse-Cassel, Elector of, 91, 94
 — Darmstadt, forest of, 179
 — Duke of, 85
 — Homburg, Prince of, 91
Hidalgo, or man of business, 387
 Hobhouse, his notes on *Childe*
 Harold, 217
 Hohenzollerns, the, 174
 Holland, first impressions of, 1,
 3; inns, 5, 7; food, 6; wine, 6;
 curios, 8; costume, 9; picture
 galleries, 10; railways, 13;
 villas, 14; monotony of the
 scenery, 17

- Sicily (*continued*)—
accommodation near objects of
architectural or historical in-
terest, 332; Etna, 333; Convent
of S. Nicolo dell' Arena, 334
Sienna, 215
Sierra, the, 53, 402, 405
— Morena, drive over the, 392
Silver, scarcity of, in Austria, 51
Simplon, 165, 167
Sixt valley, 172
Smith, Albert, 164; his ascent of
Mont Blanc, 158
Smuggling, 44; cases of, 44, 45;
Tauchnitz volumes, 131; in
Spain, 383, 393
Snails of Schwallbach, 110
Snakes at Schlangenbad, 111
Sobieski, 184
Soignies, forest of, 26, 32
Somerset, Colonel Paulet, 400
Soracte, peak of, 216
Sorrento, winter at, 213, 214,
311; climate, 313; views, 314;
commissariat difficulties, 314
— Cape of, 297
Soul, his attempted relief of San
Sebastian, 384
Southey, R., 124; on the solitude
of Bruges, 23
Souvestre, on the Kloearec, or poor
student of Brittany, 347, 348
Spa, 92; hotels, 21, 34; ponies,
33; gaming tables, 34
Spain, 378; the *octrois*, 47, 382;
coinage, 52, 383; cigars, 131;
the *ventas*, 380; fishing, 380;
inns, 381; food, 381; pigs, 381;
smuggling, 383, 393; letters of
credit or circular notes, 384;
result of the Peninsular and
Civil Wars, 384; the *diligence*,
386; *cuisine*, 388; cathedrals,
388-390; muleteers, 393-395;
riding, 395; the sun, 396;
changes of climate, 404; bull-
fights, 406; cock-fights, 407;
wines, 408
Spain, Queen, Christina of, in
Rome, 291
Spence, his studio in Rome, 281
Spezzia, 219
Spice Islands, 4
Spichen heights, 85
Splügen, 167
Spoleto, the Porto d'Annibale, 216
Spree, the, 181
Stalden, 160
Stamboul, 332
Staubach, 146
Steamers on the Rhine, 57
Steers, milk-white, of Italy, 216
Stelvio, 167
Stephen, Sir Leslie, 169; his "Play-
ground of Europe," 171
Sterns, the, 175
Stolzenfels, 56, 79
Stone-pine, the, 218
Story, his "Roba di Roma," 28
Strahlek pass, 171
Strasburg, bombardment of, 102
Strauss, Johann, 191; his dance
music, 192
Stromboli, 333
Studez, 168
Stuttgart, 195
Sue, Eugène, 133; "Mysteries of
Paris," 268
Suez Canal, opening of the, 12
Suggestum, 213
Suicides, treatment of, 93
Switzerland, decimal coinage, 51;
gambling, 92; baths, 115;
changes, 138; travelling by
diligence, 139; guides, 158, 172
— Saxon, 196; scenes in the, 197
Syracuse, 329, 333; wines, 330

T

- TAINE, on the trade of Venice, 256
Tairraz, the, of Mont Blanc, 173

INDEX

425

and, 83
 as, 397, 401; inns, 401
 y, St, of the Le-munais, 346
 user, first performance of,
 na, view from, 332
 397
 , the, 205
 itz, Baron, 124
 olumes of, 48, 124-127;
 gling, 131
 lders, the, of Zermatt, 173
 , 98
 ai, 282
 , pictures of, 9, 10
 na, 210, 211, 287
 216; falls of, 216
 oire, 157
 ray, his sketches of the
 ling tables, 88
 as of Florence, 244; Naples,
 306; Paris, 375; Rome,
 Venice, 251
 , Mdile, 375
 nene, Lake of, 216
 first train to, 139
 the, 265, 279
 155
 stto, his paintings, 255
 g, mode of, in Vienna, 189
 , Ferdinand of, 16
 athedral, 390
 Countess, 107
 ia, Prince, balls given by,
 ne, 133
 Wharf, 41
 ch, 74
 the, 120
 er, 347
 ney, at Pisa, 246
 nhuis, the, 9
 , 74
 huyt, 13; mode of travel-
 by, 13
 ae, St, 346

Trollope, Adolphus, his "Remini-
 scences," 244
 Trouin, Duguay, 353
 Trout-fishing in the Enz, 113; in
 the Traun, 121
 Tuileries, balls in the, 358; burn-
 ing of the, 373
 Turin, 244
 Tuscany, 42, 195
 Twain, Mark, "Jumping Frog," 130
 Tyndall, Prof., 169; his "Hours
 of Exercise in the Alps," 171
 Tyrol, 185
 Tyrrhene sea, 316

U

ULLOA, D', 23
 Ursula, St, shrine of, 25
 Urumea, mouth of the,
 Utrecht, 15

V

VALAIS, wines of the, 330
 Valence, 135
 Valencia, 406; cock-fighting, 407;
 the tartana, 409
 Vanbiest, the bookseller of
 Brussels, 124
 Vanderdecher, Philip, 4
 Vannes, 347; sardines, 351
 Vaud, Canton, taxing British resi-
 dents, 153
 Vega, the, 405
 Velan, Mont, ascent of, 163, 164
 Velez Malaga, 404
 Velino, 216
 Venice, 248; doguana, 248; the
 gondola, 248; a city of mourn-
 ing, 249; epidemic of cholera,
 249; under Austrian rule, 250;
 trade, 250; taxes, 250; theatres,
 251; architecture, 252; the Place
 of St Mark, 253; Campanile,
 253, 390; the Grand Canal, 254;

sheer folly of the Pharaohs, were it not for their stupendous size, but the great basilica of Christendom is a masterpiece. The basilica keeps growing upon you till you begin slowly to comprehend ; but it is only when you pass the threshold, and stand gazing into the area of the sublime interior, that the limbs of the cherubs supporting the stone basin of holy water give you some vague scale for the measurement of the superb proportions.

I did not sight the Dome by daylight when posting from Civita Castellana, though the sight became familiar afterwards in each ride and walk in Rome's romantic environs. I landed at Civita Vecchia, and in the circumstances doubt if I lost anything, for the sight came as a surprise, and as an almost oppressive sensation. The time had dragged, there was a tedious prelude, I was looking forward to supper and bed, and had forgotten all about St Peter's. After a rough passage, we had cast anchor in the harbour early in the afternoon. Though we could not moor to them, thanks to the absence of dredging, before the quarantine officers signed a clean bill of health, and while the passports were subjected to searching scrutiny, we had ample time to admire the

broad wharves and massive piers, constructed by the munificence of *Pontifices Maximi*, who had left their mark and superscription on magnificent edifices, woefully out of repair. The wharves were deserted, as those of Ferrol, once the great military port and naval arsenal of the Spain of the Indies, but when I saw it, sheltering a solitary corvette and a gunboat. The only imports to Civita Vecchia then were coal from Newcastle and groceries from Leghorn. As for exports, the rich soil of the Campagna was mostly lying fallow, and Rome did rather more than consume its own corn and oil.

You landed in a boat, as was almost invariably the case at Italian ports, and that was the first opportunity for extortion. There was a warm greeting from a rabble of beggars, who overwhelmed you with blessings, to be changed into curses when, turning a deaf ear, you were ushered by the Papal *gendarmes*—very fine-looking fellows they were—into the custom-house. If you were wise, you began the system of corruption which carries you comfortably through Southern Europe. If, worried by sea-sickness and the wrangle with the harbour sharks, you declined to bribe, it was the worse for you. In any case the custom officials knew their country-folk, and your luggage had to

be corded and *plombé* at a fixed tariff, in a currency of which you were childishly ignorant. Out of the doors of the *dogana*, you were by no means clear. Though your passport had been duly stamped in London by a pontifical agent, that charge was only good for disembarking, and now it must be viséd again for the capital. By this time the twilight was darkening—a rapid process in those parts. The inns of Civita Vecchia were detestable as they were dear, and you had to make your bargain for a conveyance. For something like twenty scudi, as I should say, we secured a ramshackle old chaise, with ragged leathern cushions and cracked windows. It was driven by a sallow postilion, in high jack-boots and gorgeous yellow jacket, with a broad hat adorned with a peacock's feather; it was drawn by three screws, harnessed abreast, with scarcely a spare or a sound leg in the lot. Each had his peal of bells, and they were fantastically caparisoned, with nodding plumes attached to the head-stalls. The traces were rope, which was convenient, as they could be easily spliced when they snapped. The luggage was secured behind with lock and chain, and off we rattled at a most unexpected pace. As Dumas remarked of his *chevaux morts* at Naples, "*Les morts vont vite.*"

Soon a brilliant moon silvered the landscape. To the right was the expanse of reed-fringed sea, to the left the eternal line of stiff ox-fences, with the grey Campagna lying in phantom-like shadow behind. At Palo, half way, we changed horses, and it was time. Kinglake wrote of the "splendour and havock of the East"; here you had further glimpses of the squalor and decay of the Papal States. The square, grim fortress of the Odescalchi frowned on a miserable *osteria* and a rickle of tumbling out-buildings. The ostlers who led out the new team were hollow-cheeked, fever-stricken spectres, for Palo is a solitary settlement in an inferno of agues and fevers. Thenceforward, even to Rome, was neither house nor hovel. Still the ox-fences, now on either hand—and stiff fencing that seaward country was, when the Roman hounds took westward, instead of holding to the east. The demons of the malaria seemed to take palpable shape, as the mists wreathed up from the stagnant pools in the hollows.

What with cognac and cigars to correct the damp, the drive, nevertheless was not too disagreeable, and when we looked out of the window, ever ahead like a pole-star was the brilliant swinging lamp, in an omnibus chartered by a party of friends.

Their high spirits had given us a fresh start from Palo. A young lady and the more youthful chaperon who had her in charge, were to be the married and maiden belles of the Roman season. Then we went to sleep, and then we woke up. We were at the gate of Rome, and parleying with the guardians. I had but vague notion of the topography, and only knew that we were being jolted over rough stones. Of a sudden we swept round a corner upon smoother paving; there was the plash and murmur of falling water. I looked out and back on the vast façade of the noble basilica; there was the Egyptian obelisk, towering over the fountains enclosed in the double sweep of Bernini's colonnades, under the falling shadows of the Vatican. Still half asleep, it was a dream realised, and such a sensation as one seldom experiences. So, I repeat, that it was a far more effective entry than if we had been demoralised by a distant view, and deliberately prepared to be confronted with St Peter's.

But the postilion was cracking his whip, and on we went, with sensation succeeding sensation. We rolled along the banks of the yellow Tiber, though then it was flashing in silver in the moonbeams. We skirted the Trastevere, and crossed the bridge,

under the shadow of Hadrian's mausoleum ; we dived into a network of narrow streets, dimly lighted below by oil lamps flickering at the crossings or corners, or before shrines of the Virgin and the saints, till we were landed at the Angleterre in the Bocca di Leone, which, as befitted a Roman hostelry, had an antique *cachet* of its own.

The Rome of the Popes was a city by itself, and never can we look upon the like again. The wrecks of the classic past have passed through the hands of the jerry-builder, and new brooms have been sweeping away old abuses, with little regard to the sanctity of time-honoured associations. In the veritable Rome superstition reigned supreme, and the priestly conservatism inclined to retrogression. The city entrenched upon the Seven Hills stood impregnable to the iconoclasts and their advanced ideas. The malaria guarded the outworks in the environs, and it was symbolical that the Church set its face against tillage, and objected to breaking up the pastoral wastes which nourished flocks of ragged sheep and bred fevers and agues. There were no railways, no tramcars, only a few struggling gas lamps in the Corso. In the matter of internal transport, though fares were really ridiculously cheap, you had to drive your bargains in

XL] THE PAPAL HIERARCHY 267

Oriental fashion. Now you can go from the Pincian to St Peter's for three half-pence, but I doubt whether the change is for the better. Sentiment says the last venerated shrine of all that was antiquated and effete should have been cherished as an unique object of pilgrimage.

Older Rome was a strange blending of pomp and misery, of wealth and squalor. The princes of the Church were blazing in scarlet or robed in purple and fine linen. You saw the cardinals in their lumbering coaches of state, with the crimson umbrella laid over the roof, being helped out beyond the gates by their acolytes to take a stroll with two or three footmen as an escort. They represented the apostles who had carried their lives in their hands—the primitive missionaries who had been sent forth without purse or scrip or a change of raiment. Battalions of monks—Franciscans, Benedictines, Dominicans—were congregated and disciplined in their barrack - convents. Some of these orders were richly endowed ; others, like Edie Ochiltree, were licensed beggars, and strong in the sanction of gown, badge, and sandals, intolerable nuisances they were. Nothing showed the strength of spiritual ascendancy more than that these questers penetrated into kitchens on rare festal

occasions, and forced grasping Roman cooks to sacrifice their perquisites. They brought back baskets and pails filled with such incongruous fragments as furnished the *plat de luxe*, to which Rudolph treated the *chorineur* in Sue's "Mysteries of Paris." It may have been partly matter of policy, but it must be admitted that the richer fraternities were generous in alms or dole-giving. Every day at noon and night the group of regular pensioners gathered round the convent door. So I remember once in Naples turning a corner out of a dark alley into a broad conventual piazza, when I intruded on a party seated on the pavement, where hunches of bread and steaming basins of soup were being served out to all and sundry. The guests were clutching the basins to their bosoms, and snarling at each other like hungry hyenas; for the Church fostered beggary as it systematically discouraged industry. There were no openings in liberal professions, and little legitimate trade; of course, petty commerce was indispensable. The monks, though knocked up at all hours from prime to matins, had a fellow-feeling for the idle; like the Neapolitan *lazzaroni*, they were content with little, so long as they were not compelled to work for it. Their absolution, following

confession, covered a multitude of sins. You always fancied in those days that the cloaked and muffled figure, possibly guarding his mouth against the noxious night air, might be a bandit or bravo, ready to turn his hand to anything for half-a-dozen scudi. Antonelli, the all-powerful Secretary of State, might be supposed to be not out of sympathy, with the bandits, for, as About bitterly remarked in the "Question Romaine," he came of a robber-race at Somnino, and had brought predatory traditions to the Papal administration. In that book of About's we have the best pictures of the Rome of Pio Nono, as in his "Tolla" he touches happily the humour and pathos of the social life of the aristocracy, who were kept in tight leading-strings by the clergy.

There was no sanitary board, and the filth of the smaller streets was indescribable. The Corso, the Babuino, and the foreign quarters were, comparatively, exceptions. Elsewhere each Roman citizen did what was good in his own eyes; when the refuse thrown out of his abode was not washed down the gutters to the Tiber, it accumulated in odoriferous heaps before his door. These were frequented through the day by lean dogs like those of "The Siege of Corinth," and after nightfall the squalling cats held high carnival.

But there was the other side of the picture. Everywhere, outside the churches, was the picturesqueness of decay, and the terror and solemnity of death reigned in the surrounding Campagna. The crumbling walls had taken the grey tints of time: the tiled roofs were green-moulded like a ripe Stilton; the long walls that shut in vast garden spaces, as you ascended to the Lateran or the Quirinal, were tapestried with orange mosses and fringed with drooping ferns. The fountains, with their time-stained marble and groups of dilapidated figures, might have been haunted by the naiads of the ancient mythology, when the gossiping washerwomen had left their work, and the laughing girls had ceased to draw water. The gardens of the suburban villas, like those of the Doria Pamphili, were lonesome enough; but the sense of solitude culminated in the Farnese Gardens, in the heart of the city—the Palace of the Cæsars—where you might listen after nightfall to the hooting of the owls, and hear the bark of the prowling dog-fox. Long since they have been cut up for excavations which have enriched the museums. Then you forced your way through tangled thickets of thorny scrub and luxurious weeds, now and again breaking your knees against some hidden

XI.] PROGRESS AND DESECRATION 271

mass of masonry, or stumbling into a pit, at eminent peril of a fractured leg. Then the Forum, like Nineveh when Layard first saw it, stood many a foot above its present level, and was an unopened treasure-house of possible research.

Then Rome was begirt by its walls, and only accessible through its gates. There were villas in their garden parks, but no suburbs. The modern basilica of St Paul, with its glorious frescoes, standing far beyond the walls, was deserted in summer even by the acclimated clergy, exorcised from their quarter by the fiend of the malaria. From each eminence you looked out on a picturesque desolation that no other civilised country would have tolerated. Last time I was in Rome, after ordering breakfast at a hotel on the Quirinal, I strolled out to the portico of St John Lateran, commanding a superb view of the Campagna, skirted by the Albin Hills, gleaming with white towns and villages. That morning the view was shrouded in the wreaths of smoke from the chimneys of a sugar bakery. A more gratifying sign of material progress, but as sadly out of touch with sentimental reminiscences, was the railway that sweeps round the walls, through tombs and aqueducts and the cottages of artisans. In no pleasant



humour, I went back to breakfast, to be rubbed the wrong way still further. In sheer curiosity I had left my old friends of the Angleterre or Londres for one of the brand-new hotels. I knew well that the jerry-builder had been abroad, but here he had been doing his scamped work with a vengeance. In place of the massive, old, vaulted and pillared morning-room of the Angleterre, my meal was served in a lofty *salon*, where the ceiling was already cracking and falling. It was significant of everything that had been going on in that quarter. The speculator and company promoter, like the German Biblical critics, were destructive as Attila, but had no talent for construction. Old Rome, as the old stave says, will stand with the Coliseum and outlast the world. The new Rome of the kingdom is already in collapse, but the damage that has been done is inestimable and ineffaceable. I am no enthusiast for the old order, but laying reckless hands on Rome was sacrilegious as restoring the Transfiguration or remodelling the Laocoon. As a single and striking example, look at the Villa Ludovisi. The proprietor, a conservative and a staunch clerical, was tempted by a price to sell his beautiful birthright to the builders. The shady cypress avenues were levelled, the stately palms





The Ludovisi Gardens
(now destroyed).

To face p. 272





XI.] THE COLISEUM RESTORED 278

grubbed up and transported—I know not if they are now flourishing in other soil—the grand domain was given over to villadom, and it is small satisfaction to remember that the speculators have come to signal grief.

The builders had done their worst in the Quirinal; the walls of the city had fallen, like those of Jericho, to the blast of tin trumpets in deceptive prospectuses; railway promoters had ruthlessly driven their iron road through aqueduct arches and venerable survivals of the Middle Ages, any one of which would have made the fortune of an English provincial town. But the greatest shock was the first glance at the renovated Coliseum. The Coliseum was the immemorial emblem of the stability of the Eternal City—“While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand”—and it was only wise to see to its strength, though it could never have gone to the ground like the Campanile of Venice. But it might have been buttressed with better material than the glaring red bricks, which give it the aspect of an American brewery or a Metropolitan tabernacle. The quarries whence the Flavian Cæsars brought the blocks of grey travertine—they were quarried in turn by the barons of the



Campagna to construct their intra-mural fortresses in the days of anarchy — were still accessible. Yet bricks exposed to weather will take the tints of time, and with an embarrassed budget these buttresses might have been excusable. But there is neither excuse nor extenuation for the Vandalism which had a free hand in the interior. Forty years ago the vast amphitheatre was picturesque in its abandon, as the Palace of the Cæsars or any rift in the Sabine hills. Forest trees had struck their roots deep in the fissures; the stone benches that had been crowded with spectators of the shows were shrouded in patches of luxuriant jungle. There were hangings of maiden-hair and cushions of lichen. Within earshot of the noisy traffic in the thoroughfares, it was a refuge for shy, wild creatures, reminding one of the prophet's denunciation of the fall of Babylon the great. Foxes littered in the recesses of the *vomitaria*; it was an aviary where the hawks were nesting with the doves; and when the broken cooing of the cushats ceased in the gloaming, the nightingales began their serenade, and the owls answered the hooting of their kinsfolk on the Palatine. Dumas, with his dramatic instincts, could have chosen no better place for the nocturnal meeting of Monte Cristo with his brigand

protégé who kept house in the Catacombs. Whether you visited it alone when flooded by moonlight, or with a merry party when it was fitfully lit up by the flare of the torches, the most thoughtless must have had a long moment of pause, and the musings could never be effaced from the memory. But the new brooms made their sweep. It might have been well to thin the timber that was sapping the walls, but the wild flowers and the fragrant shrubs were ruthlessly grubbed up; the birds were scared back to the reeds of the Campagna; the snakes and the lizards had a rough time of it; and now the romantic pilgrim has a bitter grievance against restorers who have conscientiously done their best to obliterate the sentimental.

Eothen remarks on the difficulty of working up feelings of reverence at the appropriate moment. Assuredly it is more difficult to sustain them in a rush of worldly distractions. The young visitor to Papal Rome was thrown at once into a double life. There was an agreeable and rather select English society indulging in dances, dinners, and picnics. Some of the families were old residents; others had returned, winter after winter, and they were in relations with Roman nobles or princes of the

Church. Not a few of the great houses were impoverished, and neither Roman laymen nor clerics were famous for hospitality. But there were palaces which still kept up some shadow of the hereditary state, and there were receptions of cardinals which were always crowded. It was difficult to get the *entrée* to the inner circle, but your English friends could pass you into the outer ring. It was well that you dined before you dressed, for you could not look for a supper. There was some feast of soul, but no flow of champagne; sobriety reigned supreme, and the refreshments were of the lightest. Yet men of light and leading were mixing in the motley crowd, and the gloom of the sombre reception halls was relieved by the blaze and sparkle of ancestral diamonds. At the cardinals' receptions cowed and corded monks elbowed the Church princes in their scarlet and the monsignori in purple. The ambassadors were covered with orders and resplendent with stars. Mr Lyons, then unofficial *charge d'affaires*, detached from Florence, was an exception—when he could be persuaded to leave his rubber at the club, he often appeared in plain evening costume. Antonelli, the Secretary of the State, and its master, was then the cynosure of all

xi.] ANTONELLI AND D'ANDREA 277

eyes. No man had a more winning manner, or was more fluent with small-talk. He was wont to attach himself to one of the prettiest women; and certainly he could pride himself on his success with the sex. Vain as a woman himself, his slender fingers were covered with gems, of which he had a remarkable collection, and he always thrust forward the silk-stockinged leg and the shapely foot in the diamond-buckled shoe. Cardinal d'Andrea was a rarer guest; he headed the opposition and the reactionary section of the College. Had he lived, he would have had a fair chance of the triple crown; but, indeed, as leader of the Liberals, he was so formidable a candidate that probably he would have been shelved for a nonentity.

The Austrian and French Embassies were very gay. Countess Colleredo was the more select in her invitations, and I felt greatly flattered when I had an invitation to one of her brilliant fancy balls. Brilliant it was in every sense, for never on a gala night at any grand opera have I seen such a glorious flash of diamonds. Castellani, with whom I had afterwards a quiet talk at Vienna on the subject, had much to tell of these historic Roman stones, for he had had the re-setting of the most of them. The French legation opened its doors more

widely. The Duc de Grammont was then the height of popularity, and his handsome personality was sympathetic. He deserved his reputation as the wittiest of *viveurs*; afterwards they used to tell the story of his first supper with the Prince of Orange at the Café Anglais on the Boulevard. The unfortunate heir to the Netherlands had heard of his fame as a good companion, and had courted acquaintance. The Duke came to supper, and was respectfully reserved; the Prince was disappointed and said as much. "*Eh bien, Citron,*" said Grammont, dropping his mask, and forthwith launched into a speech savouring of *argot*. But as Scott said of Cœur de Lion in "Ivanhoe," it is unsafe to trifle with royalty; the Prince resented the *sobriquet* that stuck, and the intimacy was blighted in the bud. The Duke had married a lady of Highland birth, and he made English strangers specially welcome. He had the light gifts of the diplomatist, and was emphatically a man of the world; but those who knew him found that told he would come to grief should he plunge beyond his depth into politics. More amusing perhaps, than those more exclusive receptions were the business balls given by Prince Torlonia—Polonia of "Vanity Fair." Everyone was to

seen there, from diplomats and monseigneurs to the bird of passage who was introduced by a respectable letter of credit. In contrast to those of the old Roman nobles, the suppers were superb, and champagne flowed generously, though the quality may have run down between the upper and lower tables. The great banker was an enterprising Morgan, fighting with indifferent success against clerical reaction, Roman lack of enterprise, and formidable material obstacles. For he contemplated and partially initiated grandiose schemes for the drainage of the marshes and the navigation of the lower Tiber. Then there were the charity balls given in the Palazzo Braschi and elsewhere under aristocratic patronage. They were masked and *costumé*, and any one was free to come who could buy a ticket. As strange a medley as those at Covent Garden, they never degenerated into mad frolic, and no one would have dared to attempt the *cancan*. But scandal said they gave much occasion for adventure, and there could be no question about it, if boasters as to romantic *bonnes fortunes* were to be believed.

In Rome there was always a great gathering of Bohemians. The artists of many nations flocked thither to study immortal works and sit at the feet

of famous modern masters. The Café Greco was their headquarters. Where and how they dined was often a mystery, but in spite of somewhat dissipated habits, they were an early-rising generation, and always mustered at the Greco for breakfast. They rallied again at supper-time, and smoke and chat into the small hours. As picturesque set of æsthetic ruffians they were, affecting brigand-like eccentricities of attire, generally bearded like the pard, with slouch hats shading their shaggy locks. But they looked a deal fiercer than they were, and really were a kindly set of fellows, ever ready to help a friend when the *Madame de Pieté* failed him. So long as Gibson lived, the venerable *doyen* of the alien artist confraternity they were kept in some sort of decent order. When he died, leaving no successor, I believe they rather broke loose. For, as in English journalism, when one man edits the *Times* or *Spectator* and another does penny-a-lining, there was a wide range in the guild. There were sculptors and painters of world-wide fame, whom all men delighted to honour; whose studios were beset by eager sight-hunters and who were embarrassed with commissions. When I was taken to see Gibson, he was at the height of his celebrity; his tinted Ver-

had provoked infinite discussion, though, like Hiram Power's Greek Slave, she had won hosts of fervent admirers. Then the old man's strength was beginning to break, and he was more difficult of approach than formerly. But I was fortunate in the acquaintance of Spence, his favourite pupil, and with Spence, who had the run of his studio, he was always ready to talk freely. Spence himself had attained no small distinction, when his promising career was prematurely cut short. His studio was in the sinisterly named Via degli Incurabili, and it was there I was introduced to the secrets of his art, and saw the moulding of amorphous shapes which were to develop into classical beauty. He was busied on his great group of Moses drawn from the bulrushes. I was curious as to his models, and he made an appointment when I was to see a Roman beauty. I turned up duly at the time, and was sadly disappointed when the promised beauty was a smiling baby, who was lying—not sitting—for the lawgiver in his cradle. Two other associations I have with Spence, and they pleased me more. One was a rare specimen of good Roman wine, made with exceptional care in the farm where he passed his *villegiatura*; the other, dishes of white truffles, simply boiled like



potatoes, and served like potatoes with their skins in a snowy napkin. Another pupil of Gibson's, of whom he was very proud, was the American Miss Hosmer, whose seat on horseback was as sure as her hand on the graving tool, and who was never so happy as when doing the honours of the Campagna at a gallop. I might have made much more of rather exceptional opportunities, but by acquaintance with Macdonald, Tenerani, and Shakespeare Wood, was confined to a visit to their respective studios.

I might have made more, as I say, of my opportunities, and the wanton waste of my first winter in Rome has always been matter of remorse, though I partially redeemed it in the next season. Picnics, days with the hounds, and long riding excursions are delightful in fine weather, but the winter climate is depressing and by no means conducive to effort. The skies are grey, and the air is heavy and enervating. If you neglect regular exercise, as I learned to my cost, you are likely to get lamentably out of condition. The comforts and company of the English club in the Via Condotti were a fatal snare. Unfortunately it was very convenient to the hotel in the Bocca di Leone. For Rome, with its vast extent and

straggling streets, had none of the bright *Café* resting-places of Paris. The Greco was a resort by itself, thirled, as the Scotch say, to its Bohemians, and far from attractive. The aboriginal establishments were sombre and squalid; you swept the shrouding curtain aside to find slipshod waiters, sloppy tumblers, and deleterious drinks — the chocolate excepted. If you were a fastidious smoker, your nostrils were offended by the smell of foul tobacco, and the society in general economised upon soap. The club, on the contrary, was run upon English lines, with attentive waiters and handsome furnishing. But the magnet that drew me was the whist-table. In early forenoon the tables were set out, and the stakes were seductively moderate. Moreover, you squandered valuable time in the best of company; the most regular of *habitués* was Mr Lyons. I see him now, slouching over his hand, and his piquant remarks and ready wit were always enlivening. The club carried you comfortably on to dinner, and then came the *table d'hôte* at the Angleterre—in the *salon*, with massive pillars encroaching on the table, and agreeably suggestive of the Eternal City. Thence there was an adjournment to the smoking-room before dressing for anything that might be going on in the



evening. There was invariably a knot of cronies of similar tastes and pursuits, and strangers were made free of the company. One was always grateful for a good dinner given by English residents in apartments; but, to tell the truth, the quiet evening entertainments, with music or charades, or "carpet dances" on marble floors, were decidedly dull. *En revanche* there was the resource of the theatre. There was nothing in Rome that could compare with the Scala of Milan, the Fenice of Venice, or the San Carlo of Naples. But you might hear the best singers, applaud the best actors, and see very passable pets of the ballet at fabulously low figures. At the fashionable Apollo or the Valle you paid only three pauls (fifteen pence) as the price of a stall, and at the minor theatres the plebs had places in the gallery for two or three baiocchi. Future European celebrities made their *début* in Italy, and the *impresario*, who had to look closely to his gains, engaged singers and actors for a term of years. For those three pauls I have enjoyed the beginnings of Ristori, who then almost confined herself to comedy, interpreting with sparkling vivacity the characters of Molière and Goldoni. It was afterwards in Paris and London that she betook

herself to tragedy. Above all, she excelled in the Elmire of "Tartuffé," and Story has remarked on that in his "Roba di Roma."

The Angleterre was emphatically the bachelor's hotel, and very comfortable quarters. It was reasonable besides, which was more than could be said for the Europe, the favourite resort of wealthy families. When the Angleterre was full, which was frequently the case, I have lodged at the Londra, a house in the Piazza di Spagna, where the cheery view of the modern Forum was tempered by higher bills. It was at the Londra, by the way, that Monte Cristo put up when he had his interview with the *protégé* he saved from the garotte, who conducted him with Franz d'Epinay to the Catacombs. All these hotels were of Rome and Roman; Pastrini, whom Dumas sketches with humorous realism, was the type of the old Roman landlord, ready to do anything for valued guests, so long as he could make his money out of them.

My first *déjeuner à la fourchette* at the Angleterre gave a discouraging idea of the Roman *cuisine*, though it chimed in with first impressions of the dead-alive city. What were served as *filets de bœuf* might have been buffalo steaks from the

marshes, and the vegetables of a ghastly green looked as if they might have been grown in a graveyard. But either we were out of luck or out of condition after a rickety sea-voyage, for, in reality, the *cuisine* was far from bad, and the markets were well supplied, especially with fruits and vegetables in summer and autumn. At all seasons, a stroll round the Piazza Navona, or in the precincts of the Pantheon, was intensely interesting to the sportsman and naturalist. Little could be said for the mutton and beef, but the game of all kinds made a splendid show, and the variety of beasts and birds was endless. There were boar and buffalo from the sedgy swamps; there were deer from the hills; I have seen rats among the frogs and lizards on the humbler stalls, and I have no doubt there were any number of dogs and cats, though, skinned and cut up, they might have passed with a stranger for hares or rabbits. The birds ranged from the wildgoose and heron to ortolans, beccaficos, and robins. The rare abundance of feathered tribes was an emphatic contradiction to the impression that singing birds are scarce in Italy. The fact is that they are naturally silent when strangers are generally abroad. They are in such multitudes

that they are perpetually being netted or snared for the table, with no perceptible diminution in their numbers. Rogers was unfortunate in the lean thrushes served him at Terracina; but everywhere, in inns ashore and on the Italian steamers, the *grive* is a standing *roti*, and a good one. But there are thrushes and thrushes, and the Romans, who never neglected the field-fare, had a special partiality for the redwing; for the redwing is one of the most piquantly delicate of birds, scarcely yielding in its *genre* to beccafico or ortolan, as Charles St John had discovered before, and noted in his "Natural History in Moray." And nowhere were duck and teal to be had in greater perfection. It was the thing then to get up a Roman dinner at the Minerva, a house greatly patronised by the foreign priesthood. The *pièce de resistance* was *hure du sanglier* in barberry sauce; the remove was porcupine, with herbs in a white dressing. It always struck me as insipid, with a slightly sickly flavour, like the fawn of the fallow deer. Some of the made dishes were curious, and decidedly suspicious. Undecipherable as time-faded palimpsests, they were nevertheless savoury; for the Italians eat everything, save the hide or the feathers, the teeth or the claws, and their patient

cooks have a marvellous gift of manipulating what the paupers of other countries would reject.

The varied display of game on the market booths naturally inspired a desire to look them up in their retreats. I have assisted at *chasses* of the boar in the Tuscan Maremma, though I never tackled him in the swamps and fens of the Campagna. But I have gone after snipe and ducks in the marshes, when we used to put up at the grim old hostelry of Cisterna—the first sleeping-place of the *vettura* on the Naples road. Nothing could have been more romantically picturesque than the shooting ground, though it well deserved its malarious reputation; with the wild-swine and the water-fowl, it nourished fevers and agues. The reeds and sedges flourished in exuberant luxuriance in glades that in summer-time must have been impenetrable jungle, where water-loving trees struck down snake-like roots to throw up fresh shoots, like mangroves in the Niger Delta. The hovels of the rare inhabitants were so many dens, reeking with pestilence; the morning mists wreathed up in dense grey smoke-clouds till dispersed by the noonday sun, and our hollow-cheeked guide seemed a gliding spectre, though he had sturdy legs of his own.



The (un)labeled 'P' is a watermark of the University of Michigan.



The Church of S. Maria in Ara Coeli—Rome.

To face p. 288





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and leaped lightly from tussock to tussock. The sport was as novel as it was exciting, and we were tempted to prolong our sojourns. We made fair bags of wild-fowl and snipe, though many a shot was missed, thanks to the tangled thickets and the treacherous footing; and, as we fortified ourselves for the early start with port and quinine, we never had the slightest touch of fever.

The attractions of the season which drew foreigners in crowds were the Carnival and Holy Week. At the Carnival all Rome went mad, and Romans of all ranks were reaping their harvest. Hotels and apartments were overflowing; carriages, as the opening day drew near, were not to be hired upon any terms. Each window and balcony on the Corso had been secured; there was a run upon the decorators for furnishings and draperies; all the dressmakers were overworked in devising and supplying fantastic costumes. *Confetti* and *moccoli* had been provided by the ton; the gardens and fields within a radius of a hundred miles had been stripped to supply violets and bouquets. On the morning, when the flower-girls were precipitating themselves on the carriage-wheels, the fragrance of their blooming basketfuls overpowered

the odours of the gutters. On the morning all the Piazza di Spagna was early astir, for the lessees of windows in the Corso had to find their places before the side streets were blocked by the crush, and the long procession of carriages had set in in unbroken flow. Endless parties had been made up in bewitching or grotesque dresses, and they had to meet betimes in the brakes or barouches, where they sat embedded in baskets of flowers, with ample stock of chalky ammunition. For obvious reasons, when *confetti* swept the Corso like canister shot, white was the general wear, but it was brightened by brilliant sashes and knots of ribbon of every hue. As carriages were continually brought to a standstill, the battle broke up into hand-to-hand bombardments, and before the end of the week you had made acquaintance with many special enemies. But there was a gentler side to the war, and sometimes from a balcony a bouquet of violets would come floating down, directed to its destination by a beaming smile. Then some cavalier would lay his hand on his heart, with a humble bow and a "*Gracia, Principessa; Gracia, Contessa.*"

The stranger who was well befriended was sometimes in his carriage, and as often out of



xi.] ROYALTIES IN THE CORSO 291

it, paying visits to the balconies, as to boxes in the opera. Sometimes he was graciously beckoned up, with a sign equivalent to a command. As at the Venetian dinner of the dispossessed monarchs in "Candide," there were always exiled royalties in Rome. More than one winter Queen Christina of Spain was there, living in quiet affluence as Madame Muñoz, and sparkling in jewels of priceless value, said to be heirlooms of the Spanish crown. A conspicuous figure in a grand balcony, she sat surrounded by courtiers of many nations. A beaming, good-natured face she had; but tossing ring-doves attached to bouquets from the balcony suggested cruel memories of the bull-fights and the *Autos-da-fe*. One season no one threw himself more heartily into the fun than the Prince of Wales. How well I remember his boyish exhilaration, as he flung about the confetti and flowers by handfuls, with the Duke of St Albans sitting by his side, and Augustus Lumley running behind the carriage, now and again jumping on to the step.

But all festivities must come to an end, and that week of mad frolic put a strain upon everything and everybody. How some of the starveling horses held out is a puzzle, but on the whole, perhaps

they might have been envied by the ten or a dozen of their compeers, entered for the concluding horse-race. The dog of the Derby was not in it with these. Started at the Porta del Popolo, they galloped down to the Piazza Colonna, maddened by the roar of shouting multitudes, scourged by the spiked balls, which were rattling about their sobbing flanks, slipping, stumbling and recovering themselves on the greasy pavements, with horror and terror in their staring eyeballs.

The wild revelry came to an end in a blaze of light, and for once in the year the dim Corso was brilliantly illuminated. Lanterns were festooned on windows or balconies, and the occupants of carriages and the mob of people on foot each carried a wax-taper or *moccolo*. The frolic was to blow them out, and they were perpetually being extinguished and re-lighted. Streams of wax ruined the gaily-fancied dresses—a good thing for the dressmakers of the next season. And the thieves and young hooligans had grand opportunities, for custom not only permitted, but commanded them to hustle you. Each well-got-up stranger was a centre of attraction, drawing rascality as moths fly to the flame of a candle;

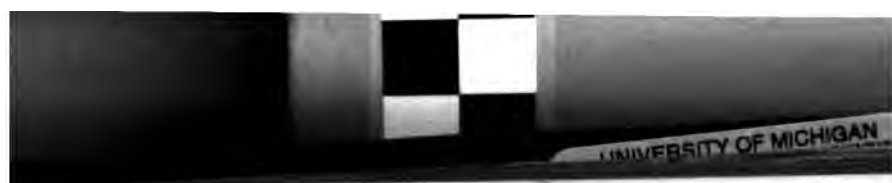
XI.] ILLUMINATION OF ST PETER'S 293

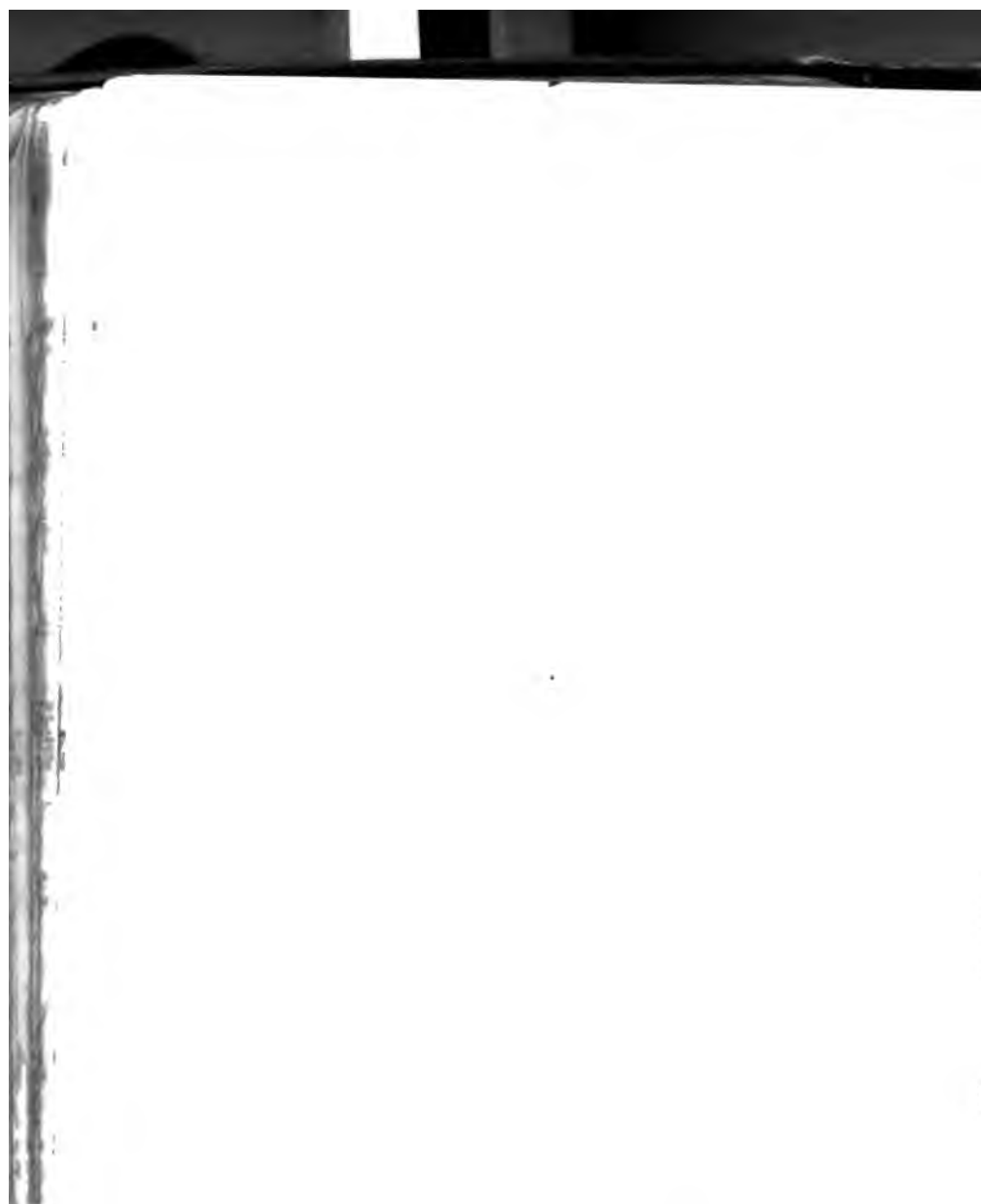
and if you were wise, you left your watch at home, and, above all, the new breast-pin in Etruscan mould you had just bought at Castellani's.

With the darkening dusk a radiance rose on the south-west, lighting the horizon with rapidly-growing brilliancy till the heavens in that direction were clear as in the day. It was a grand effect when the innumerable lanterns that gemmed the dome of St Peter's were all aglare, and no one gave a thought to the perils of the lamplighters, tempted to risk their lives for a paltry wage. But the Popes who patronised the barbaric horse-race held in that, as in other things, to sanctified traditions; it was seldom a season passed without more than one fatal accident; and as for the injured, picked up with smashed bones, there were hospitals to receive and priests to shrive them.

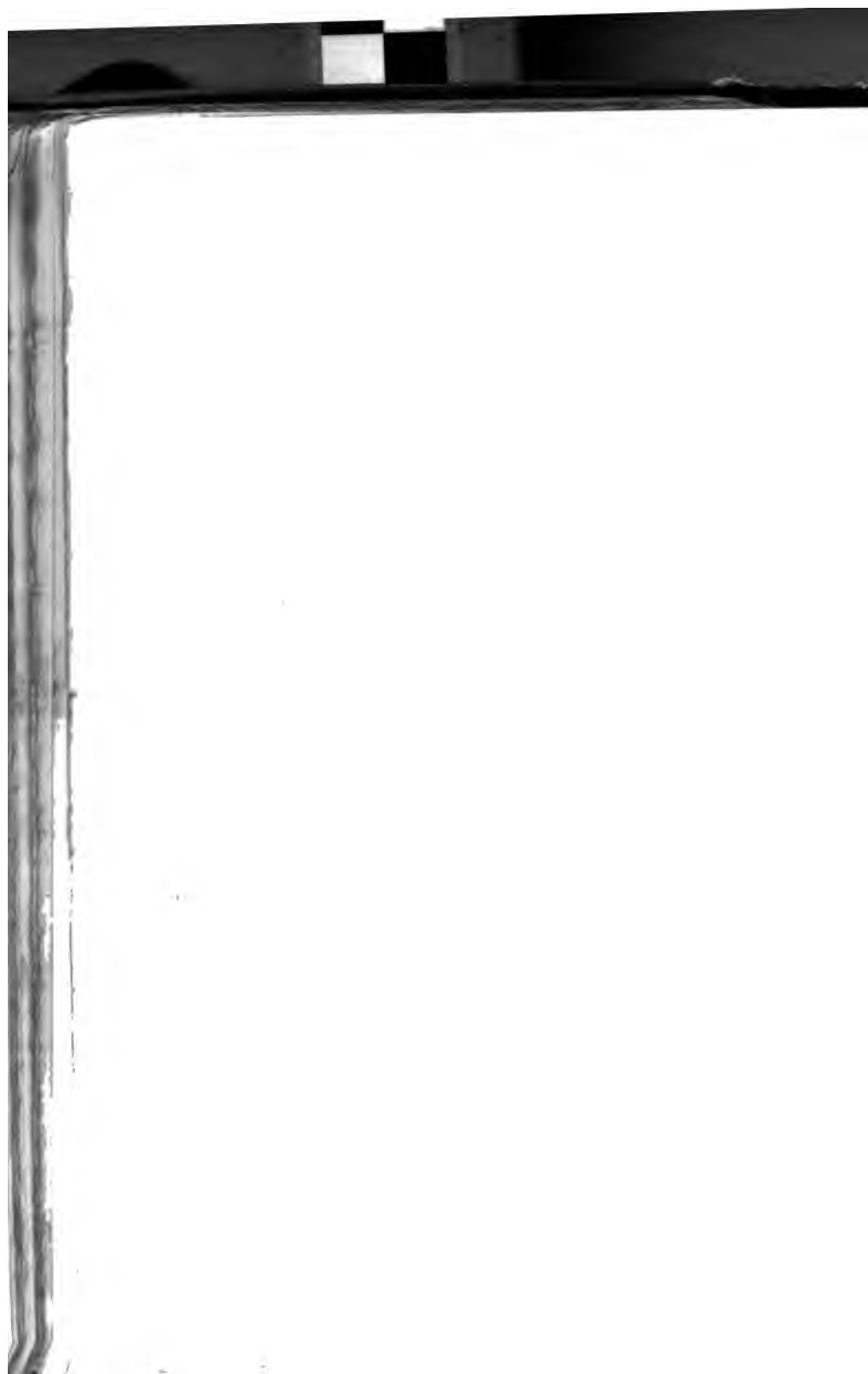
During the penances and fasts of Lent, we English, for the most part, took flight for Naples, to be back for the Holy Week, before devout Catholics refreshed themselves with the joys of Easter. Regretfully the reigning Pontiff, self-condemned to imprisonment in the Vatican, must have looked back to the glorified days of his predecessors, when there was no rival authority overshadowing them from the Quirinal, when the whole Christian

world came by delegation to their feet, and when Romans, wearing or affecting the garb of devotion, crushed each other before the portico of the basilica to receive the apostolic blessing. Yet certainly forty years ago, if the Romans were not devout, they wore the semblance of sanctity. I have seen women dropping on their knees in the great Piazza, when the mob strove to give them breathing-room, and seemed sympathetic. The scenes in the interior of the cathedral on days of high ceremony were solemn and impressive. Foreigners of influence came as to a show, securing front places ; there were Englishmen in military, diplomatic, and deputy-lieutenant uniforms mixed with the Catholic throng, hedged in by the Swiss halberdiers in their quaint mediæval uniforms, and by the Guardia Nobile, recruited from Italians of rank. But if the foreigners came to gape and stare, they left the church in reverential mood. The venerable Pope, borne down the basilica shoulder-high beneath the emblematic canopy of peacock feathers, failing in health, with lines of care on his brow and ghastly pallor on his face, played his part with sublime dignity as the spiritual father of Christendom. And when he was carried out on the portico, and the indulgences fluttered down to be eagerly









XI.] THE RAIN OF INDULGENCES 295

scrambled for, one was inclined to envy the superstition and credulity which had found peace and assurance of salvation in the bosom of an infallible Church. The brigand or the bravo could make a fresh professional start with an easy conscience if he secured one of those inestimable documents, knowing that his celestial papers were strictly *en règle*.

CHAPTER XII

OLDER NAPLES

“VEDI Napoli e poi mori”—see Naples and then die—is a saying that much depends on the circumstances in which you see the city. I have seen it in the depths of a blustering winter, when a storm of rain and sleet was driving along the Chiaia, when Vesuvius and Capri were veiled in cloud, and when the thinly-clad lazzaroni had “shrunk to close-heads,” and were shivering in extremities of cold and hunger. Happily, I first saw the reverse of the picture, when we had driven from Rome after Holy Week, and Naples was verging on its normal condition. For the height of sultry summer is the time to understand in its characteristic fulness the languid Neapolitan life, where the art of doing little as lazily as possible has been brought to perfection. Nowhere short of the South Seas, where they grow their bread on the trees, can the impecunious lead

CHAP. XII.] SEA-FRONT IN SPRING 297

a more voluptuous existence. But in spring the joyous city is waking up from hybernation through the weary winter. For once a moderate amount of effort is a veritable pleasure; the fashionable butterflies are fluttering abroad, and all the small street industries are in full swing. In old days the entry by the Northern Gate, on the Capuan road, was all that could be desired. The first object that struck you was the great and ghastly poorhouse—the Albergo dei Poveri. Nor were you permitted to drive down the superb thoroughfare of the Toledo, with its streams of carriages and its glittering shops, for the police severely regulated the traffic. The dusty vettura was directed by side ways till it struck the Santa Lucia, whence it rumbled along to the Chiaia, where the best hotels were situated. Disappointed or disgusted by squalid sights, you emerged of a sudden into the sun-blaze, which lights one of the most glorious landscapes in Europe. In front of you Capri was floating in a heat-haze between sea and cerulean sky; on either hand, far as eye could reach, extended the sweep of the populous beach from the Cape of Sorrento to the Promontory of Misenum. White villas glistened from their hanging-gardens on



the one side; on the other was an unbroken range of the humble habitations of fisher-folk and vine-dressers, familiarized through generations with the terrors of impending Vesuvius. The life of the darksome lanes and alleys had gathered out to the sea-front: fishwives were squabbling with customers in the open market-place; boats were shooting across the inner harbour from steamers blowing off the steam; officials at the landing-steps were bullying strangers and market boats, examining passports, levying customs, and exacting bribes; over-weighted calesinos, drawn by a single horse—lame on three of his legs—at a hand gallop, were rattling eastward with their perspiring freights, a hulking lazzarone or two slung in the dusty net between the axles; the crawling cabriolets and cittadine were looking out for fares, and everywhere the foreigner was beset by flower-girls, offering basketfuls of violets and bouquets of camelias for a carlino. The Neapolitan improvisatore had gone before my time—at least, I never saw or heard one—but you passed on from the music of *pifferari* in highland costume from the Abruzzi, who were gathering in a harvest of *grani* on the quays, to the strains of the military bands in the Villa Reale, where the gates were jealously closed



XII.] THE RULE OF KING BOMBA 299

against the populace, only admitted on the annual festival of Our Lady of the Piedigrotta.

Probably, had King Ferdinand not been intensely conservative, he would have relaxed that rule. Like his grandfather of the same name, who prided himself on being "king of the lazzaroni," Ferdinand the Second courted and petted the rabble. Well aware of his unpopularity with the middle classes, who had a monopoly of intelligence and progressive ideas, he had locked the most troublesome of them up in his prisons; but he was always in mortal apprehension of the explosion of the volcano, and he knew the value of the Neapolitan mob. Massaniello was not forgotten at Caserta or Capo di Monte. However, setting aside the bother of the passport system, King Bomba made his capital agreeable for strangers. His son, the Count of Capua, was really popular, and I have often heard him cheered as he passed in his mail phaeton, built in Long Acre and drawn by English steppers. But that passport system was a nuisance of pin-pricks; it brought no safety to the state and it contributed little to the revenue, for the fees were chiefly embezzled. If you neglected to have a *visé* from the Neapolitan Minister before leaving Rome, you were turned back from the gates of



Naples. I recall the case of an invalid lady who had neglected the formality when leaving Palermo, and after a stormy passage was brought more dead than alive to the landing-place. The rule was so strictly enforced that for once a Neapolitan official proved incorruptible, and she was sent summarily back to the steamer. Happily her husband communicated with Dr Rosskilly, a genial veteran who had practised in Naples for nearly half a century, and thanks to his influence with the British Embassy the matter was managed somehow, and the lady's life was saved. If you declared your intention of remaining more than a couple of days, they made you buy a permission of residence; and as you had to pay before you came in, you had to pay again before you were let out. Four *visés* were indispensable: that of your own Embassy, that of the country to which you were bound, and those of the police and of the Neapolitan Foreign Office. Moreover, if you contemplated a tour in the Neapolitan dominions, it was safer to indicate the route you meant to take, under peril of being stopped by some Jack in office. That last regulation saved me a great deal of travel and money, as I never cared to be tied down to arrangements. And the *intendents* or satraps of the provinces were arbi-



trary and absolute in their degrees as the King. When the traveller got into any kind of trouble, it was a toss-up how justice might be administered. The proconsul might be an Anglomaniac, in which case the Englishman would have handsome apologies, and be invited to a reception—never to a dinner. Or he might be an Anglophobe, and then the victim was kept a prisoner at large—at best till the Foreign Office in the capital could be communicated with.

Next to the nuisance of the passports came that of the *facchini*. The old-fashioned lazzaroni, who caused Murat so much anxiety, who found their Paradise, as Dumas describes it, in a sunbeam or a strip of shade; who lived, according to the season, on the *pizze* or the *cocomero*; who believed devoutly in the omnipotence of St Joseph and St Januarius, had well-nigh vanished, like the improvisatore or the Parisian grisette. But the *facchini* were their modern representatives, with more of their vice and less of their virtues. *Facchini* was, in fact, a free translation of rough, bravo, ne'er-do-well, street robber. With no regular occupation, he preyed in a sneaking fashion on the public at large. Almost invariably he was in the pay of the Camorra, but, like the



penny-a-liner journalist, his pay depended on his luck and on accidents. It was from the *facchini* the visitor had his first welcome, for they clustered at the city gates. Like the London crossing-sweepers, they had an honourable understanding among themselves, and threw themselves on the carriages by relays. As bees in the swarming time, they clustered on the baggage behind, which, if you were wise, was securely chained and padlocked. It was vain to protest; it was a *cosa di Napoli*. And when you reached a fashionable hotel—it was idle to appeal to the waiters or landlord for protection. Even Martin Zir would only rub his hands and deprecatingly shrug his shoulders. The *facchini* were affiliated to the omnipotent Camorra, so they rushed everything, from big portmanteaus to bundles of rugs; trod the snowy stair-carpets with dusty sandals, and intruded their persons, infested with vermin from the *fondi*, into the spotless sanctity of the bed-chamber. Of course, the wrangle over pay was left to the landlord, and he naturally conciliated these ruffians at the traveller's expense. Since the rail ran the vettura off the road, they have changed their skin but not their habits. Now they wear the livery of the railway companies, and if they only broke



the rule against asking for gratuities, one might well be content; but they are expert in thieving as ever, and it is to be feared they stand in with the guards, for no luggage van is secure from them. Those who know them best most mistrust them. 'I was travelling to Sorrento from Naples with a party, weighted with the usual amount of feminine belongings. Just as the train was starting, the door of our compartment was opened, and an avalanche of bags and portmanteaus—luggage registered and paid for—shot into it. The guard, who must have been an exceptionally honest man, explained and demonstrated at Castellamare, that by great violence all these might be so far dragged open as to admit a hand, declaring that he would not answer for them when his back was turned.

The *facchini* worrying you on your arrival gave you warning of what was to be expected from the beggars. Beggars beset the seats on the Chiaia and swarmed at the doors of the cafés. All through Italy the nuisance was great, but at Naples it was worst of all. Urchins, adepts at pocket-picking, with angelic faces begrimed with filth, who might have stepped out of Murillo's Andalusian pictures, were on the watch for cigar-



ends, and nodded significantly towards the sugar-basin if they liked your looks. I remember stopping at Cosenza, in what is still known as "the famine year," when the starving outcasts actually raided the bread in the restaurant from your hands, and snatched the food from the tables. In reality, the chronic misery in Naples was almost as great, though the lowest classes were as used to starving as eels to skinning; and the police, who had nothing to get by them, kept them in check. That city of sunshine had its darker side, which few strangers penetrated or cared to understand. The best description of it which I have come across was given by Axel Munthe, in the "Letters from a Mourning City." He was a Scandinavian doctor, who ministered to the poorest in the cholera epidemic of 1884. Nothing can be more appalling than his pictures of the lot of the 130,000 paupers who vegetated in back slums and noisome cellars. There was neither light nor air: the intolerable stench bred pestilence, and there was the typhoid fever, even more deadly to the unsuspecting foreigner than the malaria of the Roman Campagna. Nor has Naples greatly changed for the better under its northern masters. The sanitation is little less disgraceful, though the declivities of



the amphitheatre give every facility for drainage and the ample supply of living water.

Nowhere was there a more striking display of the contrasts of wealth and poverty. On ordinary occasions the grand theatre of San Carlo was run on strictly economical lines. You sat out the operas of Rossini or Donizetti in a dim religious light. But once I had the rare good fortune to see the San Carlo on a gala night. It was blazing with the lights from innumerable lustres, and they were reflected in the boxes from such a blaze of diamonds as even the old patrician houses of Rome could scarcely show. It was significant of the state of Neapolitan society. The law of primogeniture had been ruining the nobility, and few families were really rich. But all made heroic efforts to keep up appearances, and they were ready to submit to any sacrifices before parting with the valuable heirlooms which were the badges of their past. Dumas, Edmond About, and many another sarcastic Frenchman have satirised the penurious habits of the ostentatious impecunious. They starved in private that they might flaunt in public. They lived little better than the *lazzaroni*—on macaroni and salt fish; they dispensed with serious breakfast, and contented themselves with a frugal dinner and



the lightest of suppers, that they might drive out with lavender gloves in an antiquated cabriolet with a dilapidated attendant. Out of doors they frittered away the time between the carriage, the theatre, and the casino; and if they ever indulged in an extravagance, it was when tempted by the demon of play. As for the minor theatres, they were cheap enough; at the Parthenope or the San Carlino, where they played farces and burlesques in Neapolitan *patois*, you could hire a box for a piastre and a pit-stall for a couple of carlini. And Naples of the Bourbons was the purgatory of the middle classes, justly suspected by the Government, for they were seething with suppressed discontent. There was no opening in the liberal professions; there were no industries except salting fish and making macaroni; and the commerce was confined to some passenger-boats and coasting craft. Separated by one great gulf from the pleasure-loving aristocracy, and by another from the ignorant and apathetic *lazzaroni*, they were expecting the liberator who was yet to come. Every now and again a thrill ran through the more enlightened democracy when some Poerio, who had been imprudent of speech, was consigned to a dungeon and irons.



If the Government was tyrannical, the Camorra was autocratic. There was neither safety nor profit for those who were not affiliated to that secret Terror, which had its agents everywhere. All tradesmen were at its mercy; all servants were terrorised; it was notorious that the chiefs of the police were potent members of the Society. It was more than any man's life was worth to seek redress, or try to bring a criminal to justice. No state taxes were more punctiliously paid than those which were remorselessly levied by the Society. Axel Munthe gives a remarkable instance of the authority it exerted. Though his one object was to minister to the sick, he dared not have ventured into the *fondaci* and *sottoterrani*, where they lay dying untended on filthy boards, had he not had the chance of doing a good turn to a noted Camorrist. That ruffian took him under his protection, shadowing him like a guardian angel in nocturnal visits to the dens where the police could not have ventured. The Camorra, all-powerful as it was, sometimes condescended to keep up appearances. A notorious criminal, caught red-handed, might be tried and condemned. It was at once a vindication and a mockery of justice, for no prison could hold him, and sooner or later



he got the key of the fields. Generally it was sooner rather than later; for even when profusely supplied with drink and delicacies, the prison was an uncomfortable abode. Still, under the regenerated kingdom of Italy the prisons leave much to desire. They are often old convents or monasteries; they are always overcrowded. The prisoners mix indiscriminately in the court-yards, as in the Newgate of Jonathan Wild and Jack Sheppard, where they can concert plans of escape with their friends, or hatch conspiracies for overpowering the gaolers. One winter, five-and-thirty years ago, I often passed the gaol of Castellamare. There was no glass in the windows which overlooked the high-road, and behind the bars were the squalid or villanous faces of captives, lowering baskets like our poor debtors in the Fleet, clamorous for food or coin, and, above all, for tobacco. Yet Castellamare is a naval arsenal, and near to the southern capital. The numbers of those who escaped were innumerable, but I never heard of a gaoler called to account.

The poor of Naples took no thought for the morrow; they never knew how they were to live, but they did know where they were to rest at last. The daily burial at the Campo Santo

Vecchio was a sight and scene to be remembered. There was a flagged court-yard, enclosed by bare walls, on the breezy heights above the city. Nothing could be more glorious than the distant views, or more ghastly than the sepulchral foreground. There were 365 pits, each sealed with a massive stone, and one of them was opened each day in the year at a fixed hour in the afternoon. As you climbed the heights, you came upon rude biers being hurried up by the bearers. The day I went there—for it was not a sight to see twice—there were one or two open shells, but no regular coffin. The corpses were tossed down round the mouth of the pit, among loathsome beetles dis-entombed, and scrambling to get out of the way. Among a dozen or so of bodies, two especially struck me. One was a woman who had been assassinated the night before, and whose night-dress was saturated with blood; the other, a most beautiful little girl, with long, golden ringlets. The priest on duty was a sordid caricature of the overtasked chaplains who undertake the customary ceremonial at our great suburban cemeteries. As matter of form, he rattled through a hasty Mass, and carelessly flirited the holy water on the corpses. Then they were shot by the sextons into the



depths of the pit, and a cartload of quicklime was thrown down on the top of them. The covering slab was replaced to be cemented, and that pit was to be left undisturbed for another twelvemonths.

Under the Bourbons, the brigands in many districts on the mainland had it pretty much their own way; the high road to Rome was safe enough, and their old frontier haunts at Itri and Fondi were kept under strict surveillance. We could go snipe-shooting with perfect safety from Cisterna, although the surrounding woods were wont to be their favourite ambushing ground on the Roman side of the frontier. But they still terrorized mountainous Calabria, and habitually worked the roads towards the far south. In every inn, if the landlord was not in league with them, one or two of the understrappers were in their pay; and the peasantry and hill-shepherds, who supplied them with food and information, were their involuntary and often reluctant accomplices. I have made mention of my first visit to the temples of Paestum, where there had very recently been a successful capture of a couple of Englishmen, when we made out the pleasant drive as quietly as if we had been going on a drag to dine at the Star and



Garter. I own to a feeling of more uneasiness on another occasion, when I accompanied the post courier from Naples to Reggio in his light carriage, which was a tight fit for two. My companion sat with a blunderbuss between his knees, and there was a small armoury in the net swinging from the roof. It was then we baited at Cotenza in the famine-time, and the poor, maddened by starvation, were the most formidable enemies we came across. Victor Emmanuel's carabineers and bersaglieri had nearly succeeded in putting down brigandage, but the echoes of the old times were still resounding in the columns of the press and in the smoking-rooms of the Naples hotels. I am going to say something of the winter I passed at Sorrento. I broke the stagnation of life in that chilly and sunless solitude by frequent trips to the city; and whenever I dropped in at the Victoria or the Grande Bretagne for luncheon, the slightest suggestion would turn the talk to the brigands who had their dens under St Angelo of the Three Peaks, and raided the peninsula between Pompeii and Scarracatoio. All I could say was that, according to an invariable custom, I arranged my walks so as to come home for late dinner, and that my only trouble was in



avoiding trespass on the cultivated ground, girdled with fig and almond trees, and guarded by watchful dogs.

That wintering at Sorrento was a fatal folly, due to sentimental memories. We had gone to Southern Italy for reasons of health, and in an evil hour we left the Conca d'Oro of Palermo, and the comforts of Signor Ragusa's "Trinacria." Ragusa warned us, but we would not be warned. I remembered Sorrento as I had seen it in the spring-time, when you picked oranges in scented bowers on the garden cliffs of the Hotel Tasso; when balmy zephyrs breathed soft ozone from the bay, and the steep slopes were blushing with violets or blazing with scarlet anemones. Nor were we choked off in the fading splendours of November, though everything seemed to be portending a sad sea change. We left the hotel, which at least was well heated, to hire a sumptuous suite of apartments in the Villa Rupê or Falcone, which overhangs the deep ravine by the bridge. It was well in the little world of the town, and nothing could possibly be more romantic. You looked down into the chasm from colonnaded verandahs, over a precipice clothed with orange-trees, with their clustering golden fruit. The apartments were cheap



enough in all conscience, for when every summer residence was standing untenanted, not even an Italian house-agent could persuade you it was the height of the season. Unfortunately we had signed a contract for a term, and there we sat and shivered for three dreary months out of the four for which we had taken it. It might have been voluptuous with the thermometer standing at 96° in the shade. Everything had been constructed to keep out the sun. The walls were massive as those of a mediæval fortress; the windows of the principal rooms had a northern exposure; the marble floors were magnificent, but there was not a shred of carpet in the halls except before the solitary fireplace in the great *salon*. Coal was scarce and wood was dear, and it roared up the chimney with reckless extravagance. The lady's-maid used to go about her occupations carrying a tiny charcoal stove. At that time I chanced to be writing a novel for the *Cornhill*, and the most admirable chapters of that immortal work were conceived in a thick great-coat, buttoned up to the throat; in warm knitted stockings and double-soled boots. The villa felt like a family vault, or a parish church that gets one touch of warming for the Sunday. Yet the climate was damp, rather than cold. You might



as well have been in the dripping Hebrides. It rained relentlessly, though it dried quickly. At high noon the sun-god would often take a flying shot at us, when the water ran off the stony paths which led up the hills, between walled vineyards and orange-groves. And if you climbed to the ruined *Deserta*, on the most commanding eminence you might enjoy resplendent, but tantalizing views, from Ischia round by Capri to the Highlands of Salerno.

It was hard living in every sense. Servants had migrated with the summer sojourners, and we had an extraordinary piece of good luck in capturing a superannuated cook who was too feeble to flit. He had long passed his prime, but he was a master of his art, and a marvel of that exemplary patience which is the soul of satisfactory cookery. He was turned down in a superb range of furnaces—stone pits which would have sufficed for banquets had the great villa been overcrowded. He amused himself all day over a handful or two of charcoal, and the results were astounding. He would send up his *entrée* of liver and bacon, which savoured of ortolans or beccaficos. He was great in savoury omelettes of anchovy or parmesan, but his crowning triumph was a sweet *soufflé*; he always tottered in





xii.] COMMISSARIAT DIFFICULTIES 315

with it himself to the dining-room, and it collapsed like a pricked balloon if not eaten in the moment of projection. As he was responsible for the commissariat as well as the cooking, his anxieties were unceasing. There was no beef to be bought on that oxless promontory, and the mutton was detestable. On the other hand, the chestnut-fed pork was to be had in perfection, and the Sorrentese rival the Westphalians in the manufacture of sausages ; but these delicacies pall upon one after a time. Of course, old Guiseppe was an adept in the manipulation of the maccaroni, with which the High Street was festooned on the few sunny afternoons. The only times when he took leave of absence from his flesh-pots was when he went out on the quest for poultry, and once he triumphed in a master-stroke of successful diplomacy when he came home jubilant with a plump young turkey.

That winter in Sorrento was desperately dull, and it was doubtful relief breaking out for expeditions to Naples. The railway stopped at Castellamare, and when you chartered a conveyance, the horse braced tightly up in the shafts should, in common humanity, have been consigned to the knacker's yard. Driving down the hills was bad enough, but the coming back was a strain on the



nerves and the conscience. Of course you walked the best part of the way. You had been buffeted by stormy winds on the Santa Lucia and the Chiaia, and now you faced a watery gale from the Tyrrhene sea, which had probably been blowing persistently for days, and had changed the road, where it was not a rocky water-course, into a holding bed of viscous slime. Italy is the Purgatory of animals, and old Naples used to be the Hell. Even on the Riviera, in the full glare of fashionable foreign publicity, you see galled horses flogged till the blood flows, breaking down under the impossible draught of blocks of marble or granite. The Italians argue that, as animals have no souls, they must consequently have no sensations. But taking human nature for what it is, it is impossible not to have a certain sympathy with the drivers, who are underfed and over-driven like their unfortunate beasts. It is the employers and skinflint contractors who must bear the blame, with the aristocracy and middle classes who look on indifferently at atrocities that should excite their indignation.

Sorrento in its spring toilette was a Paradise, but it is only one of the endless excursions which were for ever tempting you out of Naples city.



Steam intercourse with the islands of the Bay was irregular, but you could always make the passage to Ischia or Capri in the market-boats, when there was generally an amateur musician on board, who played an accompaniment to the wild chants of the peasants. Ischia, with its volcanic soil and semi-tropical luxuriance, had had long immunity from the explosions and earthquakes which were soon to spread death and desolation broadcast; and Capri, where you could live *en pension* and *en prince* for next to nothing, had its colonies of invalids and artists, who welcomed any intercourse with the outer world, and laid themselves out to do the honours to casual visitors. There were charming picnics to His Majesty's boar-park in the Astroni crater—where, by the way, I had my worst experience of a scorpion's bite—and to the island-restaurant on the Lucrine Lake, where we feasted on the Lucrine oysters, with draughts from the flasks of the Capri or Lachryma Christi. In the hotels the native wines were absurdly neglected, and at the dinner-table three guests out of four used to patronise the medicated Marsala. But the white Capri and the red Lachryma from grapes warmed on the volcanic slopes can dispense, in their native richness, with

artificial strengthening, and are admirably suited to the climate. I drank them all through that damp winter at Sorrento, and would ask for nothing better. The intelligent traveller should adapt his tastes to the specialities of the country. Passing through Naples not many years ago, I revived sentimental memories and evoked fond recollections of half-forgotten companions, with an ideal Neapolitan breakfast at the Grand Hôtel. The *menu* was macaroni boiled in milk, sardines fresh from the net, served with frizzled parsley, and a flask of the white Capri, several years in bottle.



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and are admirably suited to the climate. I drank them all through the long winter at Sorrento, and would ask for nothing better. The intelligent traveller should adapt his tastes to the specialties of the country. Passing through Naples not many years ago, I revived sentimental memories and evoked faint recollections of half-forgotten excursions, with an actual Neapolitan breakfast at the Grand Hôtel. It was a delicious coffee, served in milk, with a fresh from the net, served with frieded pasta and a flask of the white Capri, several years old.



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CHAPTER XIII

SICILY

IN Naples the tourist found railways and good roads, though the railway takes a circuitous route to the toe of the Boot. In Sicily, five-and-forty years ago, there were only nine miles of rail, and few highways traversed by public vehicles, vetture or post-carriages. When he struck into the bridle-paths, he betook himself to horse or mule. The contrast was great between the civilisation of the chief cities, with their grand memorials of the splendours of Spanish viceroys, and the state of the interior. Landing at Palermo, you were lapped in all reasonable luxury, and rejoicing in the middle of winter in one of the finest climates in the world. The Trinacria and the Hôtel de France were as comfortable as any hotels in Southern Europe. At the former I hurt the feelings of my worthy friend, Signor Ragusa, by objecting to the mattresses with elastic springs,



which he had imported from Paris, regardless of expense. Ragusa was a walking hand-book to all that was worth seeing in the island; the worst of him was that he was fanatically patriotic. He could not hear of there being any public insecurity, when the suburban mile from the capital to Morreale was picketed and patrolled by mounted police. He was patriotically disinterested, for his object seemed to be to get rid of his guests, by making light of the hardships they must encounter, and encouraging them to court adventure. For the most energetic were tempted to succumb to the sensuous charms of sunny Palermo. Lying in the lap of the Conca d'Oro, screened by the soaring summit of the Monte Pelegrino from the strong winds of the west, it was the centre of an amphitheatre flowing with oil and wine, scented with orange and almond blossoms. The Marina, with its marble flags and balustrades, its fountains and statuary, the Flora with its flowering shrubs, skirted on one side by the sea, on the other by a range of flat-roofed palaces, were among the most enchanting promenades in Europe. Yet within rifle-shot, the gardens were seamed by torrent beds, bringing down floods from the mountains,



XIII.] TOWN AND COUNTRY 321

when the rains had set in. So it was at Messina, where there were light foot-bridges over the mountain streets, and at Catania, where the water-courses ran between rugged banks of lava. Nowhere else were the limits so sharply defined as in Sicily, between the busy towns and the country solitudes. Misgovernment and the immemorial institution of brigandage had made the people huddle together for mutual protection. In Palermo, keen upon walking as I was, I found it trying, day after day, to get beyond the interminable stretch of mean suburbs, with the paving of rough cobble-stones. At Messina you were brought up abruptly by the precipitous heights, crowned by the historical castle which had stood so many sieges. In the environs of Catania you were adrift among frozen seas of lava from the craters of Etna. Yet in each sheltered hollow, or where there was a rood of available soil, vegetation flourished in exuberant luxuriance, and near the cities, where there was a ready market for the produce, each rood was turned to profitable account.

In the country agriculture had lamentably retrograded since Sicily was the granary of Rome. The plough and the harrow were more primitive



than those described in the Georgics. The great nobles who owned vast tracts of territory had left their domains to the charge of stewards, who were often corrupt and apt to be tyrannical. There was scarcely such a thing as a yeomanry or a substantial class of farmers. Mediæval castles were ruined or long deserted; it was seldom you saw a solitary homestead. A wealthy noble or notoriously well-to-do farmer would have been kidnapped and held to ransom by the nearest band of brigands. The squandering of time and strength was excessive, for the labourers living in scattered hamlets walked miles daily to their work which often lasted for sixteen hours. Not unfrequently the hamlets were so far apart, that the labourers in harvest-time camped out or sought shelter in caves. Trade was paralysed, for no train of pack mules could venture to cross country without an escort, and the Government did not lend its soldiers for nothing. The only people who went about with easy minds were the shepherds and goat-herds, and they were almost invariably the spies of the banditti. Everything was neglected; with any quantity of water running to waste, whole districts were desolated by drought and deserted; harbours



xiii.] **BACKWARD CIVILIZATION** 328

were undredged, swamps were undrained, and rivers were unbridged—as you knew to your cost when you came to ford them. No neglect could altogether counteract the advantages of soil and climate, but even suburban gardeners handed down their fruit trees as heirlooms, and the sole exceptions were in the Conca d'Oro, which was cultivated with exceptional skill.

The state of the island was obvious to the most cursory of observers, but much of what I say is on the authority of Mr Goodwin, for many years our Consul at Palermo. I made his acquaintance in painful circumstances, on my second visit in 1870, and the acquaintance was short enough, for I only saw him once. Commissioned to write some letters to *The Times*, I called and had a cordial reception. Though ailing, he seemed in fair health and good spirits, and we had a long and interesting conversation. When I left he handed me a volume of his notes, and I little thought that I should have to return them to his executors. But two days after I had seen him, Mr Goodwin was dead.

In 1870 things were at the worst, and Garibaldi and his gallant red-shirts had left confusion worse confounded behind them. Para-

doxical as it may seem, Sicily had seldom been so well ordered as in the later years of the Bonapartes. The arbitrary methods which prepared the Neapolitans for revolution gave the Sicilians a long-wonted tranquillity, and brigandage was virtually put down. The island was mapped out into districts, each put in charge of a squadron of cavalry. The captain was held absolutely responsible for any crime committed in his district, and was supposed to make good any losses incurred. How he may have managed that, with pay in arrears, is a mystery, but it is certain the system worked to admiration. The brigand chiefs found their occupation gone; the rank-and-file had to choose between migration and honest work. The law courts had constant employment, and the crown counsel and judges were given to understand that the King expected convictions. In 1860, when Garibaldi landed at Marsala, there were 12,000 convicts under lock and key. Before he carried the war into Calabria, all had either been released or escaped. So, in 1870, restoring order was no longer an affair of police or cavalry patrols; it was a regular campaign waged by the regular army. Though the troops might turn up anywhere at any moment, there was a univer-



xiii.] THE MAFIA AND BRIGANDS 825

reign of terror. Landowners were subsidising the robbers who were their ruin; struggling agriculturists were laid under contribution, and when their sheep and cattle disappeared, they had to grin and bear their losses. Then, under constitutional government, the courts were terrorised, not by the King but by the Mafia. The most notorious criminal, when affiliated, could face his trial with equanimity. There was a remarkable example of that in 1864, when the renowned Angelo Puglino was betrayed and arrested. Puglino had had a chequered and adventurous career. He had been schoolmaster—galley-slave—Garibaldian. Then he had taken to the hills and became the most redoubtable of brigands. He ruled his band of desperadoes with an iron hand, and pistolled them himself for the slightest infraction of his laws. Crafty as he was cruel, he long eluded his pursuers. When caught, in a trial that dragged on for four months, innumerable murders were proved against him. He was merely condemned to confinement for life, and soon gave his jailers the slip. Sixteen of the band, scarcely less guilty than himself, were let off with short sentences.

The Mafia was at least as powerful in Sicily as the Camorra in Naples. When I went to some



public entertainments and private receptions at Palermo, I was warned that it was well to be discreet in the expression of opinion, however safe you might think yourself with a friendly interlocutor. Its octopus-arms reached all over the island, and the wretched peasant who shivered with cold in winter, and with fever in summer, was as much in terror as the men responsible for order in Palermo, or the magistrates who administered justice. About sixteen years ago I went to Messina on a commercial mission, to endeavour to arrange a law-suit between an Englishman and a Sicilian company. The case was clear in favour of the Englishman; the witnesses had been unofficially "precognosced," as they say in Scotland, by the plaintiff's attorney, and their evidence was irresistible. But there was no persuading them to appear in the courts, and you could not blame them. One of the most essential happened to be the housekeeper of our vice-consul. Mr Rainford, who gave me every assistance, had to own that the poor woman's lips were sealed. One morning, on her way to market, she had been threatened by a ruffian with an open knife, who flourished it over her cheeks and forehead, and told her she knew what to expect if she came forward.



The Mafia did not concern itself with harmless tourists, and the brigands, when I chanced to cross the interior, were kept so well in hand that one gave little thought to them. But the hardships, though well recompensed by the scenery and the glorious air, were not inconsiderable. After a single trial, you cut the public conveyance. There were *diligences* on the main road from Palermo to Catania, and on its branches to Syracuse and Messina; but they crawled at a wretched pace, and the company was far from delectable. The *corriere*, which carried three inside besides the post-courier, went quicker; but the luggage was strictly limited, and if the portmanteau was heavy, it had to be left behind. And the courier invariably hurried you perversely when you were desperately reckoning on the chance of getting some sort of refectation. Posting was infinitely preferable, nor did it come dear when there were a couple of travellers, and, as I have remarked in a former chapter, there was a dash of adventure in it. As with Sicilian beds there was no temptation to loiter, you were inclined to push forward through dusk and dark. Taking three horses was *de rigueur*, and there were stages where four were prescribed by the ordinances. There was always



delay in bringing out the relay, but once in the traces they made up for lost time. The light, rickety carriage rattled behind them like a tin kettle tied to a dog's tail. The wild driver, wrapped in sheepskin like a Wallachian shepherd, would crack his whip over his head and whoop to his horses like a man possessed. The better the pace, the bigger the *buono mano*. The lean horses, though on short allowance of hay or maize, were full of fire and go. You dashed down the steep street of the village—these villages are always perched on hills—you hardly pulled up for the flooded ford in the valley, and when you scrambled up the opposite bank, there might be a foot or so of water in the hold of the carriage.

If you did not see to the commissariat in advance, you were sure to be on short commons. In Sicily of the Saracens old traditions lingered, and the post-houses, save in size, much resembled Oriental caravanserais. Even at Calatafimi or Castel Giovanni they offered shelter, but scarcely professed to provide food. You were fortunate if you found anything besides bread, but, to do them justice, the bread was excellent. If you were in luck you might get eggs and an omelette, or such a skinny fowl as is to be cornered in the compound



of an Indian rest-house. But the commissariat did not matter so much ; it was your own fault if you had not made provision, and with cakes of meat-chocolate, as I have found in Spain, you can hold starvation at arm's-length for days. But the filth of those detestable dens was indescribable. When I rode on out-of-the-way bridle-paths, the first business of the courier-guide was to scrape the brick flooring with a hoe, to dash pailfuls of water over the walls, and to cleanse the table. The cracked plates were passed under careful supervision, and I carried my own knife, fork, and spoon. The sleeping accommodation was the worst part of it. Sometimes the roof was far from water-tight, and often shutters supplied the place of glass in the windows. After supping sparingly, you climbed a ladder to furnish out a feast for the bugs. I don't know why the polite writer should scruple to name things which are a brutal reality. In Sicilian inns they were famine-stricken as the labourers, and more prolific. Even in a Syracuse hotel of deserved reputation, I once passed a night in a charming chamber, with sheets of spotless white and curtains of snowy dimity. In the morning, after hard hunts and a ruthless massacre, those sheets and curtains were flecked with crimson, as if red spots



at regular distances had been a part of the original pattern.

Another redeeming feature in those inns, besides the white bread, was the red wine. Vine culture in the island was terribly backward, though the sweet wines of Syracuse were good of their sort, and as for the Marsala, as I have said, it was manipulated for the English market. But the ordinary wines of the country, slovenly made as they were, had not only body, but rather a pleasant bouquet. To my taste, they were infinitely preferable to the earth-flavoured wines of the Valais, on the strength of which we used to go excursions from Chamounix or in the Oberland; or the harsh wines of Piedmont, with a sub-smack of the barberry, which rasped the throat like a file, when they fortified you for expeditions at the back of Mont Blanc.

Riding in Sicily was a capital digestive—when you got used to it. The mules were more sure-footed than the ponies, and there was no getting to the bottom of them. Steadily doing their three miles, hour after hour, they would sulkily plod forward, with a monotonous motion like clockwork. It was something like the jolting stride of a camel, shaking you up and jarring the spine. As you sat



perched, or rather squatted, on the square packs of wood and canvas, precariously secured by rotten rope, how you sighed for an English saddle with its girths ! Knotted loops were a poor substitute for stirrups, and for a second ride I had the great good luck to pick up a pair of venerable English stirrups at Catania.

Yet I repeat that all those minor sorrows were outweighed by the scenery and the splendid air. There was no inducement to lie in bed, and you were in the saddle with the break of dawn. The vapours came rolling out of the depths, the great shadow of the Mongibello, falling over a third of the island, gradually lightened as the sun-blaze broke out in its strength. The heat drew out the aromatic fragrance of heath and copse, but as you topped each height, it was tempered by the fresh breezes from the distant sea. Each lofty eminence was crowned with towers or convents, or with villages that showed picturesquely in the distance, though they were the abodes of poverty and squalor. Now you were riding waist-high through swampy reed-beds with flowering rushes ; then you emerged on rich meadows pastured by white cattle ; next, ascending along a precipitous path, you were mounting through woods of chestnut or stone-pine,



and again, as you descended between prickly hedges of the aloe, you were in such rich sylvan glades with murmuring rills as might have seen the rape of Proserpine. The soft landscapes should have been painted by Claude Lorraine—the sterner and more savage by Salvator Rosa.

Nothing was more suggestive of the backward state of Sicily and the apathy of the Sicilians than the lack of decent accommodation near objects of architectural or historical interest that should have attracted crowds of tourists. You had to rough it when you went to admire the giant temples of Girgenti. Segeste was within tolerably easy reach of Palermo, yet the expedition had to be self-sufficing. At Castellamare, its ancient port, there was no inn of any kind. At Calatafimi, the nearest town of any size, the *locanda* was poverty-stricken beyond belief. From the amphitheatre of Taormina, looking across the straits, the sea-view is perhaps the most superb in Europe; unquestionably it beats the more confined Bay of Naples, and, in my opinion, is scarcely rivalled by the prospects over the Bosphorus from the heights behind Stamboul. Now Taormina boasts an excellent hotel, and not before it was time. When I slept there first, I made my toilette, in the morning, to the great



excitement and delight of a group of children lying on their faces. Except for the honour of the thing, there might as well have been no door, for there was a foot of space between the bottom and the brick floor. Fortunately at Syracuse and Catania, fairly thriving ports, there was no reason to complain of the quarters. Catania, besides, did a brisk business in silk-weaving and cotton-spinning, and The Golden Crown was a capital house. It was fortunate, because not only was there much to study in the way of antiquities and architecture, and in the picturesque and scientific aspect of the environs, but the visitor was probably contemplating an expedition up Etna, which depended greatly on the weather. In winter or early spring there was no getting easily above the giant's waist-belt—his head and shoulders were hooded in snow; for Etna, though always smouldering, does not keep stoking the fires like Vesuvius, or spitting flames and stones like Stromboli. The successive cataracts it has sent down on Catania show how it can rage when in real earnest, but it has a spiteful habit of playing ugly tricks and breaking out in the most unexpected places. The quiet village may any morning be hoisted on the top of a new cone, such as the Monte Rosso in the Phlegraean Fields near Naples.



I can recall no more romantic mule ride than that from Catania to Nicolosi. In the lower zone the land had been fertilized from the entrails of Etna; thickly populated and industriously tilled, it was an ideal scene of peace, plenty, and prosperity. Hamlets, cottages, and churches, peeping out of chestnut groves, and embowered in the foliage of vines, olives, and oranges, were built of lava blocks, quarried from the lava floods which had swamped fields and gardens as fertile as their own. But that scenery has been described a hundred times in the guide-books. What interested me most were the blackened walls of the Convent of S. Nicolo dell' Arena, the scene of one of the most humorous of Dumas' imaginings, where the Graf von Werder, that zealous gastronomist, foregathered with the brigand band on the strength of the cardinal's letter of introduction. Moreover, like Dumas, in the little inn I had the privilege of making the acquaintance of Dr Joseph Gemmellaro, most enthusiastic of local naturalists and geologists, who was always eager to do the honours of his mountain. He was then well stricken in years, nor did he long survive.



CHAPTER XIV

BRITTANY

IN the middle of last century and after, Brittany was still strangely neglected. The Channel passage from Southampton was exceptionally disagreeable; there were no railways; off the highways the roads were deplorable, and when you left the by-roads you found yourself astray upon desolate heaths, or were lost in a labyrinth of lanes, leading nowhere in particular. It was seldom you came across a fellow-tourist or were surprised by an English voice in your inn. Nevertheless the country had been discovered and colonised by English in search of comfort combined with economy. There were settlements of your country folk at Avranches over the Norman border, at Dinan, St Servan, and Quimper, where you could rest and refresh yourself in their society. I remember arriving at sleepy Dinan on a Saturday evening, and being absolutely astounded



next morning at church by the crowded congregation in West End fashions, a trifle out of date. A few daring adventurers ventured farther afield, renting dilapidated *châteaux* at fabulously low rents. Those recluses had to dispense even with French society, and went in for luxurious frugality, with fair shooting and some fishing. To my fancy, that seclusion was rather overdoing the thing, but the casual visitor was richly rewarded, nor had he any great reason to complain of hardships. On the contrary, in the most modest inns, he lived in a profusion of luxuries. The *commis voyageurs* were their chief patrons, and, as I have remarked before, no men understood good living better. I first entered Brittany from Southern France with a well-known *gourmet*, and one of our first breakfasts was at the Pavillon d'en Haut at Auray. We had been reading Weld's book, and looked forward to the meal of many courses he described. It was not altogether so lavish as we had been led to expect, but there were six or eight dishes, and the sea-fish—especially the mullets and the sardines—surpassed, as might have been expected, those of the Ship at Greenwich. And the bills! It was never a case of the *mauvais quart d'heure*; it was a moment of jubila-



tion over the ridiculous sum total. I forget the amount of the reckoning at Auray, but I know at Lannion, where the cook was a *cordon bleu*, we breakfasted, dined, and indulged otherwise à *indiscrétion*, for four francs a day. I talk of bills, but in some village hostelries there were no bills, for the host could neither write nor cypher. You supped and slept and broke your fast, and were told you had a franc or two to pay. But it must be owned that the solids were better than the liquors. The Breton cider, served in earthenware, was harsh as the eastern winds, and sour as the peasants' black loaves of buckwheat. However, there was generally something else to fall back upon.

You soon came to the conviction that time was unconsidered, and an American putting a flying girdle round Europe would have been driven to insanity and suicide. The public conveyances were of primitive construction, and always overcrowded and overloaded. The rope harness was always snapping and the springs giving way. The bloused conductor would adjourn with the company to the kitchen of the *guinguette*, to smoke and drink cider while horses were being changed. It was more trying



still when you chartered a *cabriolet* or *patache* for some forest drive to a castle or ruined cloister. The rickety vehicle, with its tattered leathern cushions, had been patched up and pieced together till it was a marvel of tenacious fragility. The sturdy little horse did his best, but after rain—and West Brittany is wet as West Ireland—the rutted roads were too much for him. With pluck and perseverance he would ultimately pull through, but you were generally belated on your return. Then you understood the solitude of those Breton woods—their terrors when they were haunted by wolves, brigands, and the superstitious imaginings cherished in a sombre race by the sighing of the night winds, the creaking of the boughs, the moaning of the screech-owls, and the cries of the sea-birds fighting landward before the impending storm.

Roads and carriage-wheels are useful, like railways, to take you from point to point, but in Brittany, beyond all countries, you had to use your legs. Indeed, very much of it would be otherwise impracticable. You soon understood how the *Chouannerie* held its own there against the best troops of Republic and Consulate under their best generals. It is all one entrenched



camp, a complication of impregnable positions. On each farm is a multitude of capricious enclosures, with stone walls or turf banks that might be lined with the musket or held by the pike. The lanes, like that described by Gilbert White dipping down to Selborne, are so many covered ways, in which irregulars could vanish out of sight and fire—grooved by traffic immemorial and flooded by the brooks and land springs. When the floods are out they can only be negotiated by paths high overhead, skirting the thickets; and each farm with its outbuildings is a fortress, built of blocks of grey granite. In fact, Brittany was a quarry, covered more or less thickly with soil, and more thickly bestrewed with boulders; the great thing was to clear the loose fragments out of the way of the cultivator, and so the walls of the feudal castles of Rohans, Montforts or Chateaubriants, were from 12 to 20 feet in thickness.

I used to put up at some inn where they made you comfortable, and wander out for long days with rod and fishing-bag. I cannot say that the sport repaid one, for though the streamlets looked all that the soul of angler could desire, even then there was a deal of poaching. You seldom killed



trout over half a pound, and often had to be content with a few small coarse fish. But the trouting was only the pretext for a delightful ramble. So far as speech went, I might as well have been speechless, for of course I knew not a word of the Breton *patois*; but though it was embarrassing to play the rôle of the deaf and dumb, on principle I would sometimes draw the Breton in his cottage. The men were sullen of aspect, and obviously suspicious, but I will say that they were invariably hospitable. They would cut into the great home loaf, lying platterless on the rough table, which at mid-day was welcome enough, and hand you a jug of the detestable cider, or of milk frothing from the dairy. The milk and the sugar-loaf-shaped blocks of golden butter looked deliciously tempting. The drawback was the filth of the good folk and of their abodes, and to this day I look suspiciously on Brittany butter when I see it in London windows. The flooring was that of an Irish cabin: the heavier oaken rafters were begrimed with smoke, and in the solid table holes were sometimes scooped out to serve as basins for the soup. On the other hand, as was often the case in Kentish or Sussex cottages, there were not unfrequently



cupboards of rare carving, or chests with elaborate metal-work, to hold garments and ornaments handed down as heirlooms, and these were probably the spoils of some convent or castle pillaged during the Revolution. As for their everyday clothes, they were never changed, unless when the outer layer was shifted for Sundays or *fêtes*; and though there was the murmur of running water all around, it was seldom put to personal use. The dunghill was an invariable feature: you had to tread delicately like Agag in approaching the door.

In fact, the charm of olden Brittany was its intense conservatism and mediævalism—in insani-tary habits, in primitive manners, and in pictur-esque costume; that is to say, in the three western departments, sharply divided from those of the East, as the Province is from Normandy. Combs were as scarce as forks, and if there was one trade which did not pay, it was that of the barber, unless he cumulated the functions of the apothecary and leech. The men wore their shaggy locks falling over their shoulders, and even with the ladies the *coiffeur* was little in request. Unmarried girls made it a point of modesty not to show a tress under the towering structure of lace cap; and the magnificent *chevelures* were hidden out of sight



which they would sell for a song to the wandering hair merchant. The guerillas of the *Chouannerie* often fought bare-headed, under thatch that would turn the edge of a sabre.

But if the barber did no business, the tailor was overweighted with work. The wandering mendicant was not made more welcome, and both were professional purveyors of gossip. The tailor, who was invariably employed in delicate matrimonial negotiations, became a sort of family confessor on his circuit. The Breton's daily wear was savage and substantial, as that of his Armorican ancestors. His coat of tough leather and his sheepskin cloak were warranted to withstand all weathers; but his gay gala dress was always being renewed, for it was drenched at the festivals, or ruined in the debauches to which he was addicted. At *fête* or *pardon* he was got up like a stage brigand, in jacket and vest of gorgeous cotton velvet, bespangled with silver buttons. The loose breeches of brown cloth were secured at the waist by a broad leathern girdle with silver clasp, and though he dispensed with the mediæval points, he sported clusters of coloured ribbons. The cut of the costume, albeit of similar type, differed materially in different districts. The



women were more careful of valuable heirlooms. Their caps and bodices were preciously decorated as those of the peasants of the Zuyder Zee; they were embroidered and richly bedecked with gold and silver laces. Even when the wearers must have come from miserable cottages, they glittered with ornaments of curious workmanship, which they could never be prevailed on to part with. I did buy one exquisite silver cross, but it was in the Passage Choiseul at Paris, where I was strolling between the acts at the Bouffes. Half in fun, I walked in to haggle with the jeweller, and he sold it me on the second evening for a comparative trifle.

It was well worth while in those more primitive days to go far for a *fête* or a *pardon*; indeed the one closely resembled the other, though at the *pardon* religion, or superstition, was the pretext, and at the other joviality was uncontrolled and unashamed. At both there were booths and shows and mountebanks. At both there was a deal of heavy eating, with free indulgence in strong liquors. At both, as you approached the scene by the cross-roads, you were caught up in a stream of rude vehicles and of pedestrians, clad in the gay garments of gladness which contrasted

strangely with sombre woodlands and sullen heat
But in the congregations bound for the *pardo*
as with Jews going up for the feasts to Jerusale
the religious element tempered the mirth. T
Breton's religion was of the most gloomy ca
his patriotism was largely due to superstiti
and immemorial subservience to priestcraft. I
was made up of contradictions. He piously co
mitted himself to God, when he put out fro
the rock-bound coast, with the poetical praye
"My boat is so little and your sea so great"; a
he devised all manner of diabolical dodges
lure mariners to shipwreck. He followed up
vendetta with the vindictiveness of the Corsica
and in war he would murder helpless prison
in cold blood. Yet, whether for crime
peccadillo, he felt the need of disburdening
conscience by confession and expiation. Expiatic
as taught by his Church, took the form of off
ings at the altars, and the *pardon* was at t
shrine of some saint held in high local reput
The drinking, the dancing, and the fighting we
preceded by prayers and solemn processions; a
hard by the high altar, with its crucifix an
candles, was the box, with the priest on guar
which was the receptacle for silver or copper



In those pseudo-pious performances the Bretons showed themselves closely akin to the priest-ridden Irish. At the *pardon* of Ploërmel you might have been at the pilgrimage to the Purgatory Island on Lough Dearg, as described by Carleton in his "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry."

Moreover, the most conspicuous personality, next to the priest, was common to both countries. Brittany was the paradise of privileged beggars—the professional stroller who affected something of sanctity, as Carleton's "Darby More." Always in his glory at the *pardon*, where he reaped his richest harvest, he wandered from hamlet to hovel, welcomed everywhere to the warmest corner at the hearth. He sold relics and charms, he brought the freshest gossip, he was great in superstitious legend, and impressed his simple hosts by mutterings, prayers, and blessings over the meat, in unintelligible gibberish. Possibly he was as often an enthusiast as an impostor; if not, he played his part to perfection. It is significant of the depth of the religious sentiment, that the outlandish names of half-mythical Breton saints have been perpetuated in those of historical celebrities. Tanneguy



Duchâtel was christened after St Tanguay of the Leonnais; St Triphine stood sponsor to the lady of Bertrand du Guesclin—said to have been gifted with her godmother's supernatural powers; and Balzac, by the way, borrowed from St Corentin the name of the Machiavelli of the political police, who served his apprenticeship to intrigue and *espionnage*, in the "Chouans."

Even in the days of absolute dukes and autocratic *seigneurs*, the Church had always been potent in Armorica. Devotion sanctified, though it did not soften, the savage manners of the Bretons. The monks inherited the authority of the Druids. Next to the stupendous monuments of unknown races and forgotten creeds, nothing impresses the stranger more than the richness and chastened beauty of ecclesiastical edifices in towns that have long fallen into decay, and in remote parishes that are now half depopulated. As for crosses, the country was once covered with them; they were cast down by the hundred when the Republic repressed the revolts, and the Blues, like the iconoclasts of the Netherlands, made wild work with the Calvaries. It was no thanks to those wreckers that much of the best has survived: but the green *Kersanton*, wrought



easily when fresh hewn by the chisel in fantastically florid design, as at the lovely Fool's Chapel of Folgoat, is adamantine when time has done its hardening. Yet Brittany was the poorest province of France, and if forced labour was cheap, artists of genius must have been tempted thither by generous patrons. St Pol de Leon, stranded now on a barren shore, startles and surprises with the grandeur of its churches. With its convents and monasteries, turned to humble uses or mouldering in decay, it suggests Salamanca or Saragossa; and besides the stormy sea and these faded splendours, there is much to remind one of the Scottish St Andrews. At St Pol de Leon, as at St Andrews, we should expect to see the poor student; for the cloistered shades, with the calm broken only by the growling of the surf, should be the chosen seats of academical seclusion. But it is at the modernized St Brieuc that the tourist, entering from the north, first comes across the Kloarec. There have been changes in the last forty years, but I saw the Kloarec, or poor student, at St Brieuc, much as Souvestre depicted him. The colleges where he used to study and starve were at St Brieuc, Vannes, Quimper, and Trèguier. The Breton

peasant, like the Scottish small farmer or crofter, had his ambitions. Rude himself, and saving to avarice, he economized more severely to send a son into the Church. The lad went to college, distracted between aspirations and regrets; the hard life in the uncongenial town was a martyrdom, and homesick as Souvestre has described him, he loved to take his ragged books to the fields, where, lulled into listlessness by the song of the birds, he forgot his studies in sad retrospection. When he took orders, like the Irish priest, he went to parochial work, sympathizing with the sentiments and superstitions of the peasants from whom he sprung. Fanatical for the Church and the faith, he was the soul of the Chouan insurrection. He sanctified the butcheries of disarmed prisoners, and absolved the assassin who shot an enemy in the back. The Blues, associating religion with royalism and the ruthless oppressions of the old *régime*, did their utmost to tear it up by the roots, wreaking their vengeance on all saintly memorials of the dark ages, and everywhere the æsthetic tourist has to lament that internecine strife.

The monuments of Christian piety were swept by the besom of destruction, but the rough-hewn



relics of Paganism defy the destroyer. Defaced they cannot be, for there is nothing to deface. When fallen, they have been undermined by the rains, and where they have disappeared, they have been utilized in their pristine form by some practical farmer. But even at Carnac—a quarry of “standing stones” in itself—the damage has been comparatively trifling. Generally the clergy of the Catholic Church prospected the fairest sites for abbeys and monasteries. The priests of the old religions, on the contrary, sought to shroud the mysteries of their sanguinary rites in unholy solitudes. You came upon the *menhir* or the *dolmen* on the storm-beaten promontory, or on the barren and blasted waste that kept the cultivator at arm’s length. I remember few things more impressive than arriving at Carnac in the dusk, for our *patache* had broken down *en route*, and we came late to the little public. There was the whistle of the curlew, the clamour of the stooping lapwings, and for once and the only time, I saw cuckoos flitting about in coveys. Hoisting stones big as chapels to the top of the Great Pyramid must always exercise the minds of modern mechanics ; but it was as difficult to realise the picture of that lonely heath, swarming with laborious human life, and with teams



of strong oxen, dragging the ponderous blocks. Now the farm-steadings are sparsely scattered through the wastes, and the most fertile meadows are pastured by a breed of dwarf cattle.

More astounding still than the rude obelisks of Carnac was the block that lies embedded in the island of Gavr Innis, stupendous as any column in the Karnac of the Nile. Had there been nothing else to see, it well repaid the voyage from Auray into the Sea of Morbihan, in squally weather in an undecked fishing-boat, though I have no great liking for sea-cruises in any shape. We started before daylight, to suit the tides, and the boatmen, even more lugubrious than Bretons in general, took no cheerful view of our prospects. Squinting up at the skies, the *patron* predicted foul weather—a prophecy which proved fallacious, for we had a glorious day. In very tolerable French he descanted besides on winds and currents, which might keep us prisoners, after we had threaded the islands and shot the narrows, and floated out into the open sea-arm. It was the sort of warning with which boatmen always try your nerves, before entering the low arch of the blue grotto of Capri, or one of the caves in the Shetlands, or on the coast of Sutherland. One could



well imagine what it might be on a wild day in autumn, but everything passed as pleasantly as possible. Grey rocks and grim sand-banks were gilded by a glowing sun, and there was no lack of lively company. We found the scene just as Weld had described it, with a fleet from Auray dredging up oysters, and a gun-boat looking on to see fair-play. Our own dredge was down, and though the luncheon-basket was well stored, it was neglected for those delicious Morbihan oysters, which are said to have rivalled the Colchester "natives" in the Roman markets—though, indeed, neither Lucullus nor Apicius need have gone further than their own Lucrine Lake. Ford, in his "Handbook for Spain," recommends various tours for different enthusiasts—military, artistic, ecclesiastical, etc. The Catholic epicure might do far worse than take a trip round Southern Brittany in the Lenten season. He would be hard to please if he were not satisfied, after going to Auray for oysters, to Vannes for sardines, to Douarnez for crabs, lobsters, and langoustes; perhaps, I should add, to Brest for periwinkles, where those shellfish figured at the *tables d'hôte* at the chief hotel, with papers of hairpins for assistance in picking them out.

Talking of Brest, the great sight in old days, next to the war-ships floating majestically in the magnificent harbour, was the galleys, and a hideous and revolting spectacle it was. Men still spoke of "the galleys," though the wretched convicts were no longer chained to the oar, but condemned to land labour. Coupled like hounds, in heavy irons, they were marched out in gangs, under guard of musketeers. At night they lay down, still coupled in the irons, on double ranges of sloping wooden beds, with thin mattresses and thinner blankets. The galleries were enfiladed by carronades, with gunners standing at attention. You saw the scum and dregs of criminal France, and every evil passion found expression in the faces of that vile assemblage of reprobates. You could imagine the sort of friendship that sprang up between chain-mates set on escape, as Dumas has touched it off in "Monte Cristo." You saw how men acquired the inveterate drag of the leg, of which Balzac made effective use in the "Incarnation de Vautrin," where the *soi-disant* Spanish priest was suspected as a *cheval de retour*. In the "Journals" of Thomas Raikes there is a vivid description of a chain-gang starting from the central prison in Paris on the dreary pilgrimage to the place of torment, and,



for the life of me, I could not help pitying "*les misérables*"; for, whatever the crime, the penalty seemed excessive, and the guillotine would have been a merciful alternative.

You knew, besides, that there was a horrible mixture of black and speckled sheep, and that there must be many a decent Breton there, who had only struck a hasty blow in hot blood; and for that sort of offence, if I sat on the Breton bench, I should be inclined to let the culprit down easily. Especially with the Breton of the coast, one should consider his breeding, his traditions, and his surroundings. The fisherman whose bark floated over the gloomy Baie des Trépassés, haunted by the spirits of the dead on All Saints' Eve, and who got his livelihood by braving the storms of the Atlantic, could hardly fail to be morose. His fathers, encouraged by the priests who took their tithes, had practised all manner of detestable dodges to bring mariners to grief on the inhospitable shores. They were the Corsairs who, under such captains as Jean Bart or Duguay Trouin, sailed out of St Malo, Roscoff, and Morlaix, to carry their flag, as they boasted, "over every sea," and to be a terror to skippers in the English Channel. Cool and daring in emergencies, they were to be

the piloters of the fleet by which Napoleon may or may not have hoped to achieve the conquest of England. Forty years ago the law had got its grip on them, and they should have known the consequences of a mortal *vendetta* and a fatal stab. But when you saw a group clustered in the kitchen of the inn at Roscoff or Douarnez, with their stern faces and the far-away look in their eyes, sitting round a smouldering fire in the height of summer, taking their pleasure and their liquor sadly, you saw that, as they lived in the shadow of death, they would set as little store by the lives of others as by their own.

I have many a pleasant memory of the primitive Breton inns, but among the brightest are those attaching to Lannion and Quimperlé. At Lannion you were literally, as they say at Morlaix, "between garret and garden"; the windows at the back were on a level with the terrace, shaded by apple and mulberry trees, flushed in a bloom of roses and fragrant with stocks and gillyflowers. The state bedroom and the little *salon*, hung with quaint old tapestry, looked out across the street on the "Café Restaurant, tenu par Querou," which tempted the roughest of amateur artists to try his hand at a sketch when the weather was wet. And with the



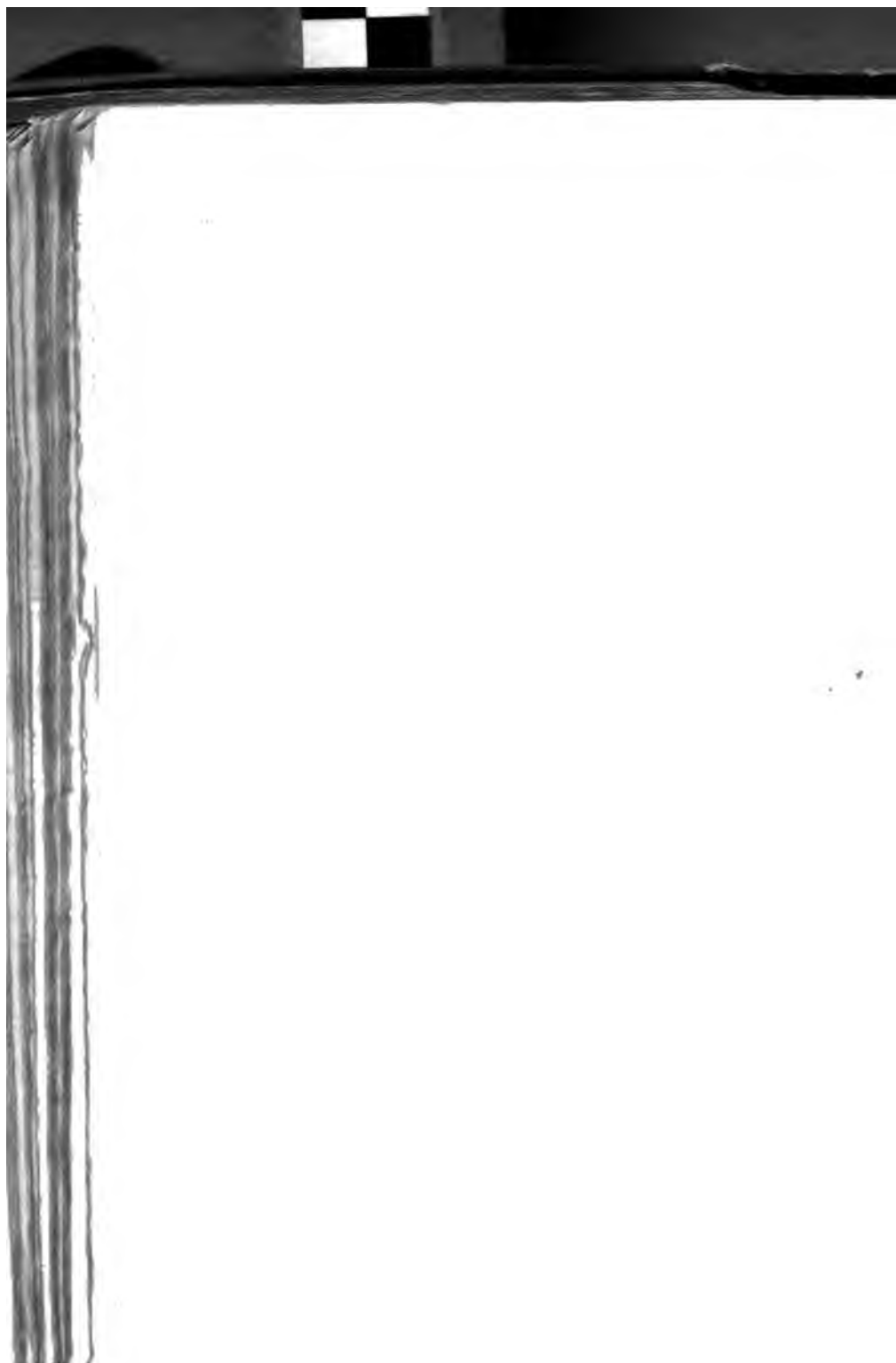
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savoury odours from the kitchen in your nostrils, you could hardly realise you were living luxuriously for a trifle over four francs a day. As for the Lion d'Or at Quimperlé, the *cuisine* was about as *recherché*, and the *addition* decidedly more reasonable than those of its fashionable namesake at Paris. More enchanting headquarters for a variety of enticing excursions there could not be. The architecture, the rooms, their decorations, and their furnishing, took you back to the Middle Ages, for the Elizabethan-looking old house used to be tenanted by the dignified abbots of St Croix. Their spirits must have haunted it still, for, spite of the temptations to excursions, you were inevitably seduced into indolence. There were seats where novels might be neglected, and shades where pipes might be smoked. Under the great bay windows a close-shaven lawn sloped down to a rippling trout-stream, and though the trout were shy from frequent casting over them, as that bit of water was preserved, there was really fair fishing. Quimperlé was an ideal place for a honeymoon, when the bridegroom was æsthetic and the bride sentimental.

CHAPTER XV

IMPERIAL PARIS

THE fall of the Second Empire had far-reaching consequences for Paris. Under Louis Napoleon it was at its apogee as the capital of gaiety and dissipation. It was the Mecca of enthusiasts in the race of pleasure, but since then London has been ousting it from the pride of place. Fifty years ago it was being changed from brick to marble, and the destructive genius of Hausmann was in the ascendant. Demolition was everywhere going forward; teams of grey Norman horses were dragging heavy wagons through clouds of dust in the fashionable quarters. Speculators who "stood in" with the Court and the municipality were buying up doomed blocks of buildings, to resell at fancy prices. The Rue de Rivoli was to be prolonged; four new boulevards and five new barracks were in contemplation. While wealth flowed in like a flood,

all classes were joyous, and the capital was swamped in highly-paid labour. *L'Empire, c'était la paix*, and France had entered on a period of assured prosperity. Perhaps the man who most shrewdly realized the instability of the Imperial structure was the Emperor himself. He knew the Parisians who had voted the *plebiscite* craved for *panem et circences*, and although his personal tastes were of the simplest, he was bound to fool them to the top of their bent. The citizen king had pinched and saved: the Emperor lavished with a liberal hand. The great offices of State were largely paid, but the pay was trivial compared to the perquisites. Early political and municipal information was worth untold gold to speculators in high office. When De Morny's stud was brought to the hammer at his death, he had one hundred and fifty horses in his stables, and horse-flesh was not the most costly of his tastes. Imperial Paris was a magnet of irresistible attraction for the railway bosses of the States, for the millionaires of Southern America who had made fortunes in mines or revolutions, and who regilded their damaged reputations in a society indifferent to morals; for Russians who had long leave of absence, and for boyards who were sated with

the vulgar vices of Bucharest and were given over to gambling, loose lives, and late supper. Napoleon would gladly have kept more respectable company, but he was cold-shouldered by the aristocracy of the Faubourg, as he had courted the tradesfolk and dazzled the populace. He paid his State officers well, but he dealt with them as his uncle with his marshals. They were expected to spend as freely as he gave, and the most favoured of the innermost ring had the chance of amassing fortunes. Alphonse Daudet, in "Nabab," gives a vivid picture of the society of the Empire, and Zola, in his "L'Argent," has analysed the financial intrigues which culminated in his memorable battle of the Bourse.

At the Tuileries and Louvre, Napoleon was rivalling, in admirable taste, the works of the Great King at Versailles and Marly. Looking out of the back windows of the palace, the Place of the Carrousel now presented one unbroken square, and on the garden front he had completed the Cour d'Honneur, destined so soon to furnish fuel for the fires of the Commune. The balls at the Tuileries and at the Hôtel de Ville were scenes to remember. Some two thousand guests were ushered up the grand staircase, between double

xv.] A BALL AT THE TUILERIES 359

files of the gigantic Cent-Gardes in their gorgeous uniforms. To all intents, they were *bals costumés*; with few exceptions the men were in uniform, and the ladies, patronizing Worth and other fashionable milliners, rivalled each other in rich and rarely fancied toilettes. The Empress set the fashions, as she superintended the arrangement of quadrilles and cotillon. What gave a special charm to those State functions were the simple manners of the Imperial host. He walked about among his guests, conversing with acquaintances, and exerting himself to put shy people at their ease. And, in the same unpretending way, he would drive out to a shooting-party. Strolling along the Champs Elysées of a morning, you would be passed by a brake, drawn swiftly by a pair of admirably matched English thoroughbreds. The quiet gentleman in the grey shooting suit and billycock hat was the Emperor of the French; had it not been for the horses, he would scarcely have attracted attention. For the decorations and the suppers on these State occasions the purveyors had *carte blanche*. The Sillery flowed in streams, and the flavour of *pâtés de foie gras* and *truffles en serviette* from the Perigord mingled with the fragrance of priceless exotics. In any

case the hosts had the satisfaction of know that the banquet was appreciated by the gue Marshallled in detachments, they were ushe through doors, jealously guarded by stat officials. When they forced the passage, ardour with which they threw themselves the refreshments was a sight to see. Before calls for carriages had ceased to echo along Rue de Rivoli, not a few of the gentlemen w obviously elevated, and perhaps some of the lad

From the sublime to the vulgar is but a st There was nothing I enjoyed more in those b liant days than driving of a fine summer night the top of an omnibus from the Madeleine to i Place de la Bastille and back. The bouleva were one blaze of light, and all *bourgeois* Paris v on the pavements. It was not an expensive pl sure, for the price was six sous, and the or drawback was that you might not care for yo neighbour on the roof. I remember once, but th was afterwards, between the German siege a the Commune, having a new pair of pantaloo ruined by an affable butcher, who carried in h hand the "inwards" of a fresh-killed sheep. Fro end to end the broad boulevards were crowd to overflowing. From the open windows of ti

xv.] EVENING IN 'THE BOULEVARDS 361

illuminated restaurants came the clatter of plates ; from the windows of the billiard *cafés* the click of balls. Between the acts the male audience was scattering from the theatres, lighting cigarettes, and making a rush for liquid refreshment. The street hawkers were vociferously plying their trades, and the old ladies seated in the newspaper kiosks were overdone with custom. And as you travelled eastward it was curious to note the changes in the *clientèle* seated before the *cafés*. There were the fashionables and foreigners on the Boulevard de la Madeleine—the Grand Café and the Café Americain were not yet in being. On the Italiens, formerly known as the Boulevard de Gand, the society was much the same, but it began to shade away towards the Capucins and along the Montmartre into political and journalistic cliques of pronounced opinions. The *café* of the Opposition press was the Variétés ; Government journalists patronised the Café des Princes, over the way. The Helder and the Cardinal were places where arrangements for theatrical affairs of honour were often matters of elaborate arrangement over a *ponche* or absinthe. For in those days the bock was almost unknown ; since the war, Alsatian beer—and very good and light it is—has superseded

more deleterious concoctions, and may be the chances of the French in any future war of revenge.

À propos to evenings on the boulevards and billiards, we used often to drop in after dinner at the Café du Grand Balcon. As there were two of them, more or less, you were always pretty full of a table. You had to regulate the strokes of the elbows of your next neighbour, and it was pandemonium of noise and racket. One evening we were playing near the windows, when the room was dominated by two or three loud reports from the street. In the general rush to the balcony, we had the advantage of front places. The panic-stricken crowd was scattering and then stopping to stand and gaze, in front of the Opera House over the way. Some prostrate figures were being picked up from the pavement; a wounded horse lay kicking, and others were being released from their harness. Orsini had flung the bomb which the Emperor escaped so narrowly; and perhaps Napoleon never had such a breath of incense of popularity as when, with imperturbable serenity, he bowed his thanks to the audience, who stood up unanimously to cheer him vociferously.

A man must dine wherever he is, but dinner

xv.] VANISHED RESTAURANTS 368

Paris was the grand feature of the day. Another way of seeing the boulevards to the best advantage was dining at the Café de Paris. There you saw them at luxurious leisure, and before the lamps were lighted. It was a more expensive method, but almost worth the money, whether you could afford it or not. De Musset used to say you could not pass the doors under fifteen francs. The great *salle* of the famous restaurant was on the *entre-sol*, and if you had secured one of the favourite tables you could sit breast-high above the ebb and flow of the tide of humanity. The trouble was, that if you were sensitive you felt you were flaunting your enjoyment in the faces of the less fortunate, who cast longing looks upward. The *cuisine* of the Café de Paris was unsurpassed, but it has passed with the Trois Frères Provençaux, and Philippe's, and why so sad a fate has befallen them is a mystery. The only explanation is the rise of grand caravanserais and fashionable hotels further to the west, laying themselves out for sumptuous *tables d'hôte*, and little inferior in *petits diners soignés*. Half a century ago, the three vanished restaurants may be said to have been *facile principes*, and their regular clients never objected to their prices. The Café Anglais and the Maison

Dorée might give you as good a dinner—and certainly the former excelled in changes, as in the portentous capacity of the wine-glasses, which insensibly ran up the bill. But they had a reputation, not altogether undeserved, for dissipated suppers and unholy orgies, which scared hyper-respectable customers away. It was at the Café Anglais that the Prince of Orange set the example to a party of jovial *convives* of throwing all the china and crockery into the side street. Durand's Café of the Madeleine—where Boulanger hesitated on the eventful night when audacity might have made him Dictator of France—was in a cheerful and central situation, and there was many a pleasant party there, for it was patronised by the British embassy. The Trois Frères, with its stronger touch of the garlic—which accentuated its Provençal extraction—had its *spécialité*, of which it kept the secret. The *potage à la Bagration* figured in other *cartes*, but it was only at the Frères that it was to be had in perfection. “Bisque” was another favourite *potage*, but for delicacy the “Bagration” left it far behind. There the *chef*, though he had no monopoly of that *plat*, always staked his credit on the *faisan à la Sainte Alliance*—stuffed with boned snipe and woodcock and the

choicest truffles of Perigord. The neighbouring Vèry and Vèfour seemed even then under partial eclipse, and it is a marvel how they should have survived when the "Brothers" were submerged.

My own favourite resorts were the Café Voisin for breakfast, and Philippe's for dinner—I mean when I was making a sojourn in Paris and sought to combine frugality with luxury. Philippe's—the famous old Rocher de Cancale—being out of the way, in the Rue Montorgueil, depended a good deal upon citizens from the Marais and the Montmartre quarter. They knew what was good, but understood the value of money. *Gourmets* of European reputation resorted to the place, as Hayward has told us in his "Art of Dining." But you could dine excellently for eight francs, wine, coffee and *chasse* included, from the *purée aux croutons*, or the *bonne femme*, to the *omelette soufflée* and the Roquefort. The danger was when you had the honour of a personal acquaintance with deaf M. Pascall, who made the round of the tables, rubbing his hands and disinterestedly suggesting some dish which he felt assured would meet your approval. The dish was all right, but it possibly doubled the *addition*.

When you were putting up at Meurice's, the

Café Voisin, so to speak, was round the corner. It was my first love among Parisian restaurants and I never was false to it, for there I was initiated in the charms of French cookery, in the intricacies of the gastronomic volumes bound in red velvet. The Voisin was more Provençal than the "Provençaux," and it caught me the first breakfast with the *plat de jour*—*poitrine de mouton, sauce Bearnaise*. The worst of Voisin was that you were overcrowded, and the atmosphere was stifling in summer. But they used to let apartments on the upper floor, and my friend of mine took up his quarters there till after a course of practical gastronomy he was driven to give them up by a sharp attack of gout. The cellar of wines, and especially of Burgundies, with all growths and vintages, methodically classified, was altogether exceptional. When I went to dine there after the *Commune*, the dignified *sommelier*, who took a fatherly pride in the cellar, was sadly shrunk and crestfallen. He suffered more in mind than in body through the sieges, when his wines had been ruthlessly requisitioned for the hospitals. His wish seemed to be to get rid, on any terms, of the new stock they had laid in, and which was hanging sadly on his



He brought bottles of young vintages of Romanée and Chambertin, which only wanted keeping, in the hope that old acquaintances might be persuaded to take them off his hands.

But in those days, in Paris as in Vienna, you might dine of the best and yet drink cheaply. No man need have asked anything better than the Beaune Premier, at three francs, of Philippe's or the Voisin. If you went to one of the cheap restaurants in the Passage de Panoramas, where you breakfasted for two francs and dined for three and a half, wine included—very fair they were, though stuffy—the *ordinaire* was remarkably sound, and for an extra franc they give you a bottle of capital Bordeaux. Champagne may have fallen a little since then, but all other wines have gone up. A few years ago I dropped in for breakfast at the Café Riche, and they had nothing from the Gironde in the wine-list below six francs a bottle. I repeat that why any of these renowned restaurants should have closed their doors is a mystery. They charged practically what they pleased, from Vachette on the Boulevard Poissonnière to Ledoyen in the Champs Elysées and the Moulin Rouge in the Rue d'Antin, though they did not go as far as Brebant afterwards, who dispensed altogether with

prices in his *cartes*, and told protesting guests that they were charged for exclusiveness. But what profit could be made by selling good viands at fabulously low prices was shown by the enterprising butcher, Duval, when he opened his cheap restaurants in many quarters. With soup or salad at twopence, turbot or roast mutton at fivepence, you could dine sumptuously for a couple of francs, with all the cleanliness and service that could be desired.

Fifty years ago the hotels frequented by the English were, for the most part, old-fashioned, and the choice was limited. Those in the Place Vendôme were airy, select, and extravagant; they ranked with Claridge's in London, and the grand *suites* were monopolized by princes, ambassadors, and millionaires. Meurice's was the house of the affluent middle class, and in the *chansons* of the *cafés chantants* and the caricatures, the typical "Anglais" was always satirized as hailing from it. He wore a white beaver hat, and carried a *Murray* and a big pair of opera-glasses. Those songs and satirical sketches disappeared with the *entente cordiale* and the Crimean war. Meurice's was comfortable, especially in winter, when you could have an English breakfast without going

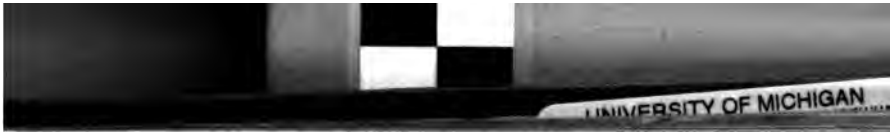
abroad, at the street end of the dark *salon*, with the *Times* or *Galignani* stuck up against the coffee-pot. In those days *Galignani* was readable as the *Figaro* or the *Gaulois*; it studied piquancy, and devoted itself to London and Parisian gossip. But the bachelor at Meurice's fared indifferently. He climbed by a spiral staircase to a *suite* of pigeon-holes, the biggest about the size of a bathing-machine. There were noise and bustle enough in the courtyard, but there was no temptation to lounge. I found myself better off in that way with Fleury at the Windsor next door, where the quiet little court, closed to carriages, was overshadowed by a spreading plane-tree, under which you might dally with an *al fresco* breakfast. I tried the Bedford, once favoured by *Times* correspondents, and I tried the Vouillemont, an excellent family hotel, in what is now the Rue Boissy d'Anglais. In both the dulness brought me nearly to the brink of suicide, and indeed I shifted my quarters from the Vouillemont, after a sojourn of twenty-four hours.

In fact, in those old-fashioned establishments, modernized survivals of such hostelries as that of M. La Hurières in the Rue de L'Arbre Sec, where La Mole made acquaintance with Coconnas, there



was neither light, nor sweetness, nor sociability. The smoking-room at Meurice's was rather an exception; there was generally a lively group of English assembled of an evening, and for a time Mr Hudson, the dethroned railway king of England, reigned there supreme. I took greatly to the philosophical old gentleman, who was always good-humoured and who could easily be drawn into reminiscences of the days when he kept open house at Albert Gate and had half the impecunious aristocracy for his courtiers.

The opening of the Louvre Hôtel inaugurated the new era. Seldom has a bold speculation had more startling success; from the first, it was filled from basement to attics. The special feature was the Cour d'Honneur, covered in with glass; with the *café billard*, and the rows of lounging-chairs in front, where, sipping your English sherry and bitters before dinner, you could sit and watch arrivals and departures. With the *remise* opposite and the grand staircase in full view, it was the microcosm of Parisian life. Grave statesmen and diplomatists, descending from sober broughams, came to leave their cards upon distinguished foreigners; ladies in furs or cashmeres or gossamer summer toilettes, according to the hour or the



xv.] LIBERTY OF THE LOUVRE 371

season, were being handed out of barouches or landaus; neat-ankled milliners were tripping up the stairs, attended by porters with portentous wicker-baskets; shady gentlemen of fortune were ever on the prowl, seeking to scrape acquaintance with unsophisticated strangers. Like the Nord at Cologne, it drew tourists from the minor establishments like a maelstrom; it became a social centre where you were sure to meet with friends, and by waiting while the days glided pleasantly by, could pick up eligible travelling companions. One great attraction was that you were absolutely independent. At the smaller hotels, kept under the searching eye of the landlord, you were bound to do much for "the good of the house." You sneaked out to dine or breakfast at the restaurant, with a sense of guilt. At the Louvre the room and the *service* were the only arbitrary charges. Everything else was paid in ready money, and nobody knew or cared about the total of the bill. As the rooms were arranged almost identically, when you crossed the threshold you felt thoroughly at home; you knew beforehand the exact positions of bed, wardrobe, and writing-table, and dropped naturally into the familiar armchair. My invari-

able telegram was for a room *au troisième, près de service, en face du Louvre*. It was no use telegraphing for rooms on the Palais Royal side, as they were invariably engaged. But a friend, who could afford it, set upon the collating of biblical manuscripts, permanently secured a cock-loft on the fifth floor, though he seldom occupied it more than a few weeks in the year. There were no lifts in those days, and it was a stiff climb to his chamber, but once arrived, you were well repaid. The rattle of carriages was softened to a soothing murmur, and you had glorious views down the chestnut avenues of the Tuileries Gardens to the wooded uplands of Sèvres and St Cloud. Of a morning, after coffee or chocolate in your bedroom—and the Louvre chocolate was the best I ever tasted—you could walk over to the picture galleries, to kill the hours until breakfast in the company of the great masters, turning over the portfolios of etchings by Rembrandt or Rubens. If the day were wet, you could take refuge in the arcades of the Palais Royal, getting up an appetite for the delicacies of Vèry's or the Trois Frères, by looking into the tempting windows of Chevet. Afterwards you found all the Parisian



and foreign journals in the Café de la Rotonde. The Palais Royal was even more the microcosm of Paris than the Louvre. Luxury and shabby frugality were everywhere rubbing shoulders. The fashionable restaurants prided themselves on high charges; in those where back doors opened on the Rue de Valois, there were breakfasts at a franc and a half, and dinners at a trifle more, with four courses and dessert. One jeweller would show sets of rare stones in his window, as valuable as any in the Rue de la Paix; in another was the garish glitter of cheap and trumpery imitation. At the corner of the Galerie d'Orleans was the book-shop of Michel Lèvy; a *confrère* within a stone's-throw pandered to vicious tastes with a cynical display of the vilest garbage.

But the magazines gradually encroached on the hotel. Customers objected to climbing unnecessary flights of stairs, and the fall of the Empire, with the burning of the Tuileries, sealed its fate. It changed its character when it shifted into cramped quarters—patronized, by the way, by General Boulanger—and the tide of foreign visitors had set westward. The Grand, with its more magnificent proportions and higher charges,

was but a flashy copy of its prototype, where you missed the quiet comforts of a luxurious home. Since then, hotels from the Place de l'Opéra to the Arc de Triomphe have been multiplying so fast, that there is no keeping count of them. A sharper line than ever has been drawn between the cosmopolitan caravanseraï and the unassuming native *bourgeois* establishment; between ostentatious wealth and modest mediocrity. There is scarcely a town of a few thousand inhabitants in France, which is not invoked to court provincial custom, by giving its name to some quiet establishment up a side street. And in these, if you get the hint from an intelligent Frenchman, you may find comfort and motherly care with absurdly reasonable prices. The Hôtel de Bade, with its long tiers of unpainted window-sashes looking out on the boulevards, was the most pretentious of the class, and at one time had a certain fashion. And in the little Hôtel de Richelieu, close to the Opéra Comique, were quarters as snug as any man need desire. There was a restaurant on the ground floor, advertised in Russian characters and kept by a "Russian," who was really a Parisian cockney from the Batignolles. From five to seven it was overcrowded with trades-

folk of the quarter; after seven you could dine at ease and in peace, and were seduced into excess and indigestion by inimitable *salades Russes* and other specialities of the establishment.

An Englishman does not much care to change his hours, but the attractions of the theatres and concerts encouraged early dining. At the Opéra Comique, Mdle. Thillon was the star; her angelic beauty drew enormously, but she reminded you of a paroquet; she had the looks of an angel and the scream of a cockatoo. Jullien as a conductor was the fashion, and Offenbach as a composer was the rage. Night after night his *Orphée aux Enfers* was running at the Bouffes, and with the final mad *cancan* of gods and goddesses, the enthusiasm of the spectators rose to fever-heat. Madame Emile de Girardin's comedies, especially *La Joie fait Peur*, were much in vogue, and the younger Dumas had just startled and rather scandalized the city with his *La Dame aux Camelias*, where Madame Doche was an exquisite Marguerite Gautier. You had heartbreaking dramas at the Gaieté, melting the spectators into tears, and sanguinary melodrama at the Porte St Martin, with half a dozen murders and as many suicides. The censors of the Imperial

stage were not severe, and the playwrights of the Palais Royal ventured on scandalous liberties. They revelled in broad suggestion and witty *doubles entendres*; actors and pretty actresses entered heartily into the spirit of their parts. It took a good deal to shock a Palais Royal audience, but sometimes the most suggestive passages were pointed with a symphony of long-drawn breaths and a suppressed chorus of "Ah! ah!" Yet you were at least as much amused, and with more self-satisfaction, at the Français, within a stone-throw, where Molière then kept the stage, and Mdlle. Brohan was a light of the first lustre. The Lyrique and the Châtelet were then in course of demolition, nor could one regret the antiquated structures. In Baron Hausmann's new buildings there was ample elbow-room in the cushioned stalls, nor did you risk a quarrel for treading on some susceptible gentleman's toes, when going out to smoke your cigarette between the acts.

The Baron was then spending fabulous millions of francs on the Champs Elysées and on ornamental landscape gardening in the Bois de Boulogne, which reminds one of the lively evening entertainments in the Jardin Mabille and at the



Château des Fleurs—the counterparts of our own Vauxhall and Cremorne. Perhaps the less said of them the better, or of the dances at the Rue Cadet—the Parisian Argyle Rooms—which drew immensely in winter. Yet they cannot be altogether passed over in silence, for they were eminently characteristic of the free and easy Imperial *régime*. A financier who had made his fortune, or a man of assured political position, prided himself on his indifference to ordinary *convenances*. I have seen a grey-haired senator, great in speech at the Luxembourg, in smart white hat and faultless sporting costume *à l'Anglais*, paternally applauding a notorious *coryphée* who was dancing the *cancan* with flagrant indelicacy. Nor, although there were reporters on the prowl with note-book and pencil, did it furnish an *entrefilet* next day for the most envenomed of the opposition journals. But these were times when the heir to an European throne might be seen riding obsequiously at the chariot-wheels of a Cora Pearl, and when Marguerite Bellanger of the music-halls and the Latin Quarter—*née* Françoise Lebœuf, and bred in a laundry—was much in evidence, associated with a yet more illustrious personality.



CHAPTER XVI

OLDER SPAIN

FIVE-AND-FORTY years ago Spain was much as Ford described it in the inimitable hand-book, into which he threw all the passion of an ardent lover and hearty hater. When he wrote, the memories of the Peninsular campaign were still comparatively fresh; he gave no quarter to the French; he was bitterly sarcastic on the sins of the statesmen, the generals and degenerate *grandees*, who had lured Moore to the verge of destruction, and played Wellington false; but he had nothing but praise for the lower orders, and as he described them, so I found them. The only drawback to those invaluable volumes was, that they were too bulky to be stored away in saddle-bags; and then, as now, much of the grandest scenery, and many of the most interesting historical scenes were only to be visited on horse-back.

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CHAP. XVI.] *VENTA* IN THE PYRENEES 379

My introduction to Spain was in Spring trips from Pau. We made sundry expeditions to San Sebastian, where Frederick Arden, an old *habitué* in the Pau colony, was our hospitable vice-consul. But my first acquaintance with roughing it in the *dehesas* and *depoblados* was on an expedition with ladies from Gabas, above the *Eaux Chandes* to the Baths of Salins, on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees. We stopped short of that, because the ladies' hearts, or strength, failed, and we passed the night in a village *venta* in very primitive quarters. The ladies were mounted on mules, and the males trudged on foot over the stony wastes on the watershed, besprinkled with snow and surrounded by mountain-peaks, flashing, in their silvery radiance, to the sunshine. In spite of the burning sun, there was still ice on the pools, and as we were not in training for severe work, we indulged immoderately in light wines chilled in the snow-water. Imprudently trusting to the hospitality of Salins, the provisions were nearly exhausted before we reached those rough night-quarters. The old folks who kept the *venta* were altogether taken aback by the unexpected incursion. As for sleeping accommodation, they made no difficulty;

there was a loft with three large beds. It never occurred to their innocence that we should object to using it in common. That matter was easily arranged, for the men could bivouac on the settles in the kitchen, or find softer couches on the hay. But the improvised supper was the queerest possible repast. There were still some fragments of *Galantine* and *pâté de foie gras*, with a sufficient supply of champagne and Bordeaux. For the rest, there was a greasy soup with bacon and scraps of bread floating in rancid olive oil; a black pudding of heterogeneous materials, and some shreds of lean mutton smothered in garlic. None of us had much sleep that night; through many a rift in the rotten roof we could hear the ladies turning and moaning; and for myself, I was glad to cool my fretted body with a plunge in the stream which rushed past the door. But I am bound to say that was an unfavourable specimen of the *ventas* in the Basque Provinces, Navarre, and Arragon. I have fished in those provinces, and in the inns, as in the angling, there was always the exciting element of uncertainty. The streams, though full of fish, had invariably been poached with drag and casting-net, and the inns,

on the whole, were the safer speculation. They were almost always unprepossessing in appearance ; often they showed no sort of sign, and you were received less as a guest than as an enemy come to spy out the nakedness of the land. Sometimes, no doubt, the place was barren of anything except stale black bread and sour wine. Then you could only mutter "patienza," and take up a couple of holes in your belt. But in three cases out of four, give the Spaniard of the North time and courtesy, and with inadequate means he would serve you an admirable repast. A soup of similar character, but infinitely superior to what I have described ; trout from the stream, eels from the Ebro, lamb cutlets with a *purée* of vegetables, a respectable omelette, and an undeniable salad. He would souse the salad recklessly in vinegar, and poison the small mountain mutton with garlic, but that could not be helped. So far as the North goes, I think Ford is too severe in his condemnation of the national *cuisine* as only to be tackled by *dura ilia* ; and even in the South you can always fall back on the *puchero*. The Spanish pigs, fattened on the fall of the chestnut, acorn, and beech - mast, were not to be excelled, nor have the hams of Estramadura

and Andalusia robbed their high reputation. Whether those of Chiclana, as Ford avers, have given themselves the exquisite finishing touch on a snake diet, I do not pretend to say; but it is certain that if the Spaniards have devoted themselves to swine-flesh, out of detestation to the creeds of Moors and Jews, it is a sensible and commendable feature of their Christianity.

There were eight royal roads radiating from Madrid in all directions, admirably engineered and execrably kept up. That entering France by way of Irun was rich in historical associations. You looked down to the sea-fords, where Wellington passed the lower Bidassoa, on the Isle des Faisans, and on the roofs and spires of Fuenterrabia, as to the geographical position of which Milton in one of his grandest passages got strangely mixed. That was a wild speculation, by the way, by which a French Society sought to resuscitate Fuenterrabia as a Biscayan Monte Carlo, and make the dead bones live again to the rattle of the roulette ball. At the custom house, beyond the bridge of Irun, you were struck by the encouragement Spain has always given to free-trading. The activity of the Christina Government in defence of the tobacco

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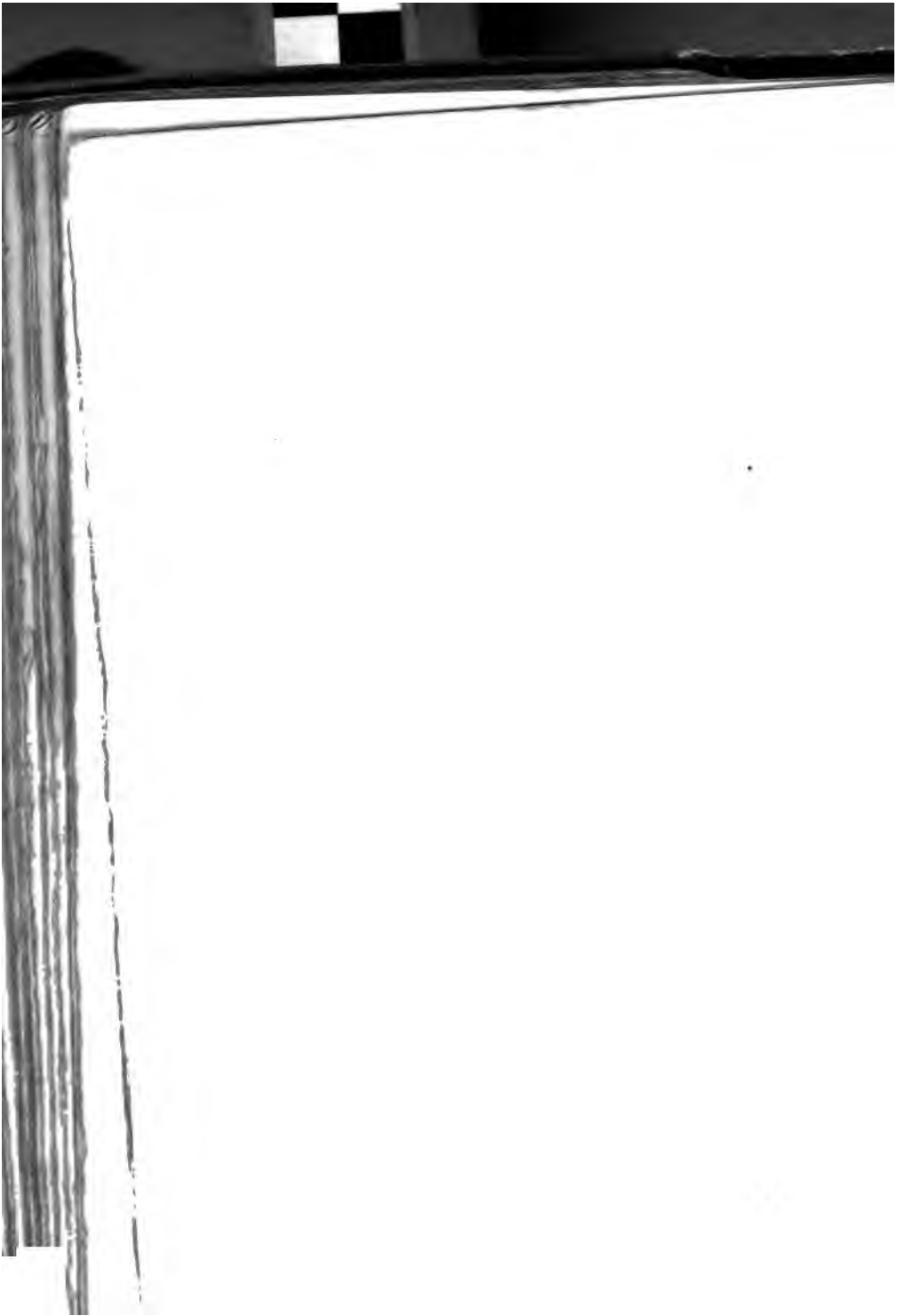
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Fuenterrabia from the Irun Road.

To face p. 322







monopoly had filled the Pyrenean Passes with daring smugglers, as it made them the most certain recruiting-grounds for Don Carlos. If he could only have paid his levies, even without the leading of a Zumalcarregui, the legitimist pretender might repeatedly have marched to Madrid. At Irun the search for tobacco and lace was always inquisitorial, not to say indelicate, and oddly enough the laces were often wrapped round the men, while cigars were secreted under feminine draperies. Perhaps it was partly due to international jealousies, for the only place in the Peninsula where you could buy decent cigars was at the Casino of Madrid.

There was infinite trouble about coins and cash. The maravedi of Don Quixote's tours, though a historical myth, was still a factor in calculations; thirty-four of them went to a real—about equivalent to 2½d. Infinitesimal copper coins were beneath counting. The peseta was nearly equivalent to a franc. As for heavier metal, the handsome silver duro, or pillared dollar, was being superseded by the French five-franc piece. Gold was scarce, and it was a great nuisance, and some source of peril, to have to provide yourself with heavy silver bullion for a riding trip. You hesitated to trust your



saddle-bags out of your hand, and suspected the servants at the *posada* or *venta* of weighing them and calculating the inducements to robbery. The exchange for a gold coin, between Navarre and Arragon, or between Castille and Valentia, often varied more than 20 per cent. And then the cashing letters of credit or circular notes was always a cause of worry. In old Germany it was bad enough : in provincial Spain it was intolerable ; but except in the capitals or great commercial cities there were no regular bankers : the leading merchants were the local money-brokers. They looked askance at Coutts' signature, and declaring the transaction eminently speculative, strove to drive a Spanish bargain ; as for the notes of any other house, they would seldom have anything to say to them.

It is a wonderful drive along that beetling coast-road by which Soult attempted the relief of San Sebastian, looking down into the profound rift of the land-locked harbour of Passages. Everywhere one saw the blackened wrecks of the Peninsular and Civil Wars, for each country house had been held and stormed, and every village had been sacked and fired. The genius of the Spaniard does not lie in restorations,



xvi.] A SPANISH SEA RESORT 385

When the wealth of the Indies was flowing in, churches, palaces, and bridges were built for eternity, and even after the memorable sieges, the massive architecture of Salamanca and Saragossa was only superficially scathed. But with San Sebastian, the Gibraltar of the North, it was different. Real's fire from the castle laid the town in ashes, and in the horrors of the storm, when our soldiers broke loose, the mischief was consummated. The new San Sebastian was a modern town, already much in fashion as a sea-bathing resort. The hotel where we used to put up was French, and kept by a French landlord, and it was with some difficulty he was persuaded to send the *desayuno de rigueur* up to the bedrooms—a cup of chocolate in which the spoon would stand, a glass of ice-cold water, with the sugared *azucarillo*. By the way, the chocolate and *azucarillo* were served in some of the poorest *ventas* in Biscay and the Asturias. The fish-market of San Sebastian was even better supplied than that of Cadiz, which is saying a great deal, and with fish of finer flavour.

I walked off the first morning to the sea-wall at the mouth of the Urumea, below the ford, waded waist-high by the gallant Portuguese brigade,



when the fortress at last was stormed by Graham. There was a row of fellows sitting on the parapet, and they were hauling in grey mullet, hand over hand. The water ran so limpid beneath them, that I could see the fish swimming among the rocks at the bottom, in meditation as to a rise at the hooks. Last time I was there, the town was full of *migueletes*, or mountain militiaman, out for the summer training. They were all presumed to be loyal to the dynasty, but it was interesting to note the trend of political feeling as indicated by the colours of the *bérets* of the country folk. The red is Royalist, the blue Carlist, and for one of the former there were a score of the latter.

There was no *train rapide* from Paris to Madrid, and, with the exception of some lines from the capital or the seaports, the royal roads were everywhere served by the *diligence*. In the Spanish *diligence* there was nothing to complain of: it was roomy and commodious. Wealthy *grandees* sometimes travelled in their own coaches, but the posting arrangements were poor in the extreme, and strangers in light carriages were often brought to a standstill, finding the truth of the proverb that the more haste, the worse speed. Everyone used the *diligence*, from



xvi.] **THE SPANISH *DILIGENCE*** 887

the *hidalgo*, or the man of business in the *coupé*, to the peasant woman with her baskets in the dusty *rotonde* behind. The covered and springless wagon—counterpart of that described by Fielding and Smollett—was chiefly patronised by the poorer sort undertaking prolonged journeys. There were few stiffer stretches of mountain road than that between San Sebastian and Vittoria. When we traversed it in early winter, the mountain-summits were covered with snow, and the snowdrifts were lying deep on the northern slopes. Bitterly cold work it was, when you were looking forward to basking in Andalusia, and ill provided with wraps. But two of the company were warm enough—the *mayoral*, who drove from the box-seat, and his aide-de-camp the *mozo*. The *mayoral*, flogging his wheelers, whooping and swearing at large, was in a chronic state of perspiration, while it was the business of the light-footed *mozo* in sandals, running by the side of the long team of mules, to keep them up to the mark, with short whip, pebbles, and curses. Once in the *coupé* or *imperiale* you were snug enough, if you had laid in a stock of patience and meat-chocolate. The chocolate made you independent of the doubtful halts, when at the *para-*



dores provision was made for the needs of the travellers. The fare of the *table d'hôte* fell off in variety as you travelled towards the south, but you could always rely on the *puchero*, which was eminently satisfying. The Spaniards carry their patience into their *cuisine*, and the slowly-simmered stew of pork, bacon, and chick-peas is as savoury as any hungry man need desire. But those *paradores* or *fondas* in the towns, as strong as castles, were gloomy as the convents they had often been, and chilly as ice-houses. There was a rush for the single stove or fire, and you had to thaw before you sat down to table, having to give way in common courtesy to the ladies.

I have admired most of the famous cathedrals of Europe, but never have I been more suddenly impressed than by the interior of Burgos. After ordering breakfast, I had strolled out for a preliminary inspection. The approaches were not over-encouraging. Even more than at Antwerp the cathedral is crowded up by mean streets and squalid houses. You were all unprepared for what awaited you within. When you had walked up the nave and reached the transept, the attention was seized and you stood wonder-stricken. Never can I forget the effect as

I gazed up into the lofty octagon, supported by columns, springing from a circle of circular buttresses. The effect was the more startling that there was nothing of the "dim religious light," which filters at Segovia and Toledo through the glories of painted glass. When the French blew up the castle, all the glass in the city was shattered, and the stained windows of the cathedral had never been replaced. I had more time for admiration than at the moment I cared for. A great funeral procession came in to solemn organ tones, and before I realised the situation I was almost forced to my knees, while a great wax taper was thrust into my hand. It was flattering, but annoying, for I knew nothing of the virtues of the departed, and meantime the cutlets were being overdone, and the companion of my travel would be mystified over my absence.

That was my introduction to the splendours of Spanish ecclesiastical architecture, nor were the expectations it raised disappointed. Near-by on the royal road, from north to south, four cathedrals stand out pre-eminent. Segovia, with its lofty tower and soaring cupola, rivals Burgos as a masterpiece of the florid Gothic of the



latter half of the 16th century. Toledo, the seat of the Primate Archbishops, though repeatedly wrecked or sacked, still bears witness to what it must have been when it was enriched by the munificence of kings and nobles, almost beyond the hopes of priestly piety, pride, and avarice. For situation it is unsurpassed, crowning the spires and roofs of the city, which, huddled together like old Edinburgh between its Castle and Holyrood, is encircled—as Berne by the Reuss—by the rush of the foaming Tagus. The wealth of Toledo and its canons was proverbial—the King of the Castilles was canon *ex officio*—but the Cathedral in the capital of Andalusia was no less richly endowed. The southern edifice excels the other in the grandeur of its proportions. At Toledo the Moors have left their mark, but the Moorish type is still more strikingly displayed at Seville. Side by side with the church, on the site of a mosque, is its Campanile, the Giralda, built by a Moor, almost simultaneously with the Campanile of St Mark's and the leaning towers of Bologna, where the Muezzin used to call the faithful to prayer ere the Cross had waned before the Crescent.

But I have been drawn into a digression, and



La Puerta Santa—Toledo.



La Puerta Sangre—Toledo.

To face p. 390







xvi.] A VENTA IN LA MANCHA 891

must retrace my steps. The cold in the northern passes was severe, but nothing to what we experienced on the treeless and wind-swept plains of La Mancha. The railway ran from Madrid to Manzanares, and there we were deceived by Spanish calculations of time in establishing communications with the *diligence* for Cordova. We had left Madrid on a Sunday afternoon, and booked from Manzanares, as we fancied, for the *diligence* leaving at midnight. We took our seats at Madrid, in the *coupé* of the *diligence*, which was hoisted on a railway truck, and comfortably bestowed ourselves and our belongings for the interminable journey. At Manzanares we were invited to descend and make way for another party. The authorities were authoritative, if not convincing, in proving from the way-bill that we were really booked for the Monday night. There was no help for it but to get out, and then we had our first dismal experience of a Spanish provincial pot-house in winter. The window of the bare sleeping-room was glassless; we had to make our toilette at the pump in the courtyard; at the wood fire in the kitchen cooking was going on, and the seats were pre-engaged, like those in the *diligence*, by muleteers and a



ragged mendicant. They showed no Castilian courtesy in making way, and the mythical associations of the hostelry with Don Quixote and Sancho did not go far to console us. At breakfast we would have given a world for the tripe and cow-heel Sancho marked for his own. How to get through the long day was a puzzle, for if we put our heads beyond the door, the north wind nipped our noses; we had parted with our heavy baggage, and no literature was forthcoming. Towards afternoon we grew desperate, and settled the matter by taking return tickets for Alcazar junction, distant some thirty miles. There, in the restaurant, we made a capital dinner, and were back in good time for the midnight *diligence*.

I can recall few more miserable experiences than that dreary drive over the Sierra Morena. The French had their troubles there, before and after Baylen, and we could sympathize. We were invited to walk the best part of the way, and there was nothing for it but to comply, else we should never have scaled the passes. A sleety rain had turned the snow into slush and filled the hollows with icy mud. Soaked to the knees, splashed to the eyes, and chilled to the

marrow, we congratulated ourselves when at last we attained the summit. Then we made up for lost time, and rattled down with a vengeance, though we drew up in Cordova twelve hours after time. Sitting for hours in saturated garments, I shall never forget the exquisite sense of bliss when we breathed the balmy air of the valley of the Guadalquivir—the transition from the storm-twisted *wettertannen* of the Sierra to the voluptuous orange-groves had been so wonderfully sudden: it was the passage of a soul in pain from Purgatory to Paradise, when, after changing and breakfasting, we strolled through the fragrant orange courts into the cloistered shades of the Cathedral mosque. Yet we had not altogether left Purgatory behind, for the vociferous beggars were sticking to us like leeches, as the fleas had bothered in the *coupé* of the *diligence*.

Spanish smuggling is a decaying trade, and the mule-train, as a national institution, has been undermined by the railways. Then the muleteer still monopolized the carrying in all the mountainous districts. The Margatas were a race by themselves—the most daring, the most trustworthy, and the most grasping of all. Borrow



has picturesquely described how the Margata, when driven to bay, would defend his charge to the last, entrenching himself behind his beasts, with the blood streaming from wounds, all taken in front. But the average muleteer was a fine manly fellow, priding himself on the care he took of his team. The muleteers knew all the short cuts through valleys or over hills, but in the *diligence* you passed or met long trains of them, with jingling bells and tasselled trappings. Sometimes they indulged in extravagance of coquettish luxury, seemingly ill adapted to stand rough weather. I remember seeing a train start from Vittoria market-place in a blinding snow-storm, with silver bells of musical chime, and variegated housings that might have come fresh from Liberty's. For the muleteer was often a musical genius. Byron sang that he did not carol lustily as he was wont to do; but that must have been a poetical fancy, or a phase of passing eclipse when Spain had been trodden under the foot of the foreigner. In the Basque country especially, where every man was a patriot, you used to hear the muleteers' chant of some time-honoured ditty of romance blending with and drowning the tinkle



xvi.] SPAIN FROM THE SADDLE 395

of the bells. And in the kitchen of the rudest *venta* where you were putting up on a ride or a fishing trip, you saw the muleteer, when he had looked to his mules' provender and his own supper, snatch up some guitar with broken strings and scrape off a very creditable performance. Then others would join in with a chorus to his accompaniment, and probably the concert, which had drawn all the girls within hearing, would wind up with an improvised *fandango*.

After all, the only way to see wilder Spain was from the saddle. The riding was not so sensational as what Eothen described when he found himself alone in the desert, to make his own way to Gaza. The care of his life was in his hands, and he "liked the office well." You had your trusty guide at your elbow, nor could you dispense with him. Nevertheless, there was a rare sense of independence, with all your immediate worldly goods and a hare or a brace of partridges in the saddle-bags — especially in the first freshness of the early morning, when you had been roused from a rough shake-down or a scented hay-truss, indifferently refreshed, and fevered with flea-bites. The sea-breeze or the winds, cooled in the snows of the Sierras, set the



pulses beating at double - quick time, and the blood was coursing through every vein. As the sun showed above the eastern hills, the lights and deep shadows were simply glorious; I have seen nothing finer than some of those Spanish effects, except sunset in the Libyan desert from the citadel of Cairo. The Spanish sun is never leisurely about lighting the fires, and as the leaping blaze struck down into the valleys, the fog-wreaths were drawn upwards with fantastic mirages. Then the warmth brought out the aromatic fragrance from the pines, from arbutus and oleander in the natural shrubberies, and from the thyme and sage which give so piquant a flavour to the rabbits you hoped to meet in *venta* or *ventorilla*. I remember nothing more enjoyable than the ride from Cadiz to Gibraltar, the first part associated with the memorable expedition of Graham, ending on the blood-stained Hogsback of Barrosa, where La Peña and the Spaniards shamefully failed him. The track rose to commanding heights and dipped into profound ravines; you passed the streams which had been waded waist-deep by the soldiers, and where the elderly British chief got so deplorably wet that his men shouted to their "father"



xvi.] TARIFA TO GIBRALTAR 897

to go and change his clothes. Across the straits the rugged African coast was looming on the southern horizon, and now and again you caught the sparkle of the sun on the white houses of Tangiers. Beyond Tarifa the scenery became more savage and more enchanting. As you threaded the coppices of oak and chestnut, sometimes you were blinded with the lights from seaward streaming down a glade, and then you were blinking in darkness, when you should have been looking to your horse's feet—though, indeed, any hired Rosinante was pretty safely to be trusted if you threw the bridle on his neck and left him to his own devices. Coming down on Algeciras, before skirting the bay, you caught glimpses through the branches of the cork-trees of the lion couchant that held the narrows between his paws. You could not distinguish the embrasures of the batteries, or see the grinning teeth of La Vieja, but you realised the strength of the Rock that defied escalade and storm.

As you rode up to the gates before gun-fire, you felt that the thorn in Spanish pride was in strong and safe keeping. There were smart fellows enough in the light companies in long arrears of Spanish pay; in the recent campaign

in Morocco, they had hunted the tall Moors out of their trenches, the bayonet in their loins. But even the more stately guards, mounting guard before the palace of Madrid, lounged through their duties. At Gibraltar gates the sentries in brilliant scarlet were standing at severe attention, and the men who were idling at the doors of innumerable drinking-shops bore themselves as a superior race to the sun-dried and swarthy scorpions of the rock. In time of profound peace, everything in that isolated out-post went by clockwork, and every military precaution was taken, as if a hostile fleet in the offing, with fire-ships, and bomb-proof floating batteries, were threatening another siege. Never was there a fortress where Bellona, in all her terrors, wore a more graceful guise. The northern face looked down grimly and squarely on the sandy Spanish lines; but the south front was wreathed in deceptive smiles. On the Alameda and the cliff-walks, formidable batteries, such as "the Snake in the Grass," were masked in beds of geranium. When they fired a salute, the smell of the powder mingled with the scents of heliotrope and mignonette.

When he drew bridle at Gibraltar, and paid off his guide, the Englishman found himself in clover

and in England. I passed the first night—it was in Christmas week—in the Club House Hotel, with sanded floors and boxes in the coffee-room, which reminded one of Hatchett's White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly. In the hall there was a perpetual clinking of swords; there was a prevailing odour of bottled stout and tobacco. Before the door next morning sergeants and corporals in scarlet of the line and blue of the artillery were fraternizing with Jews, Moors, and Kabyles, communicating by signs rather than speech. That morning I was carried off to barracks on the heights, and made an honorary member of the Mess of the 7th Fusiliers. Pleasanter fellows I would never wish to meet: but they had brought their Northern tastes and habits along with them; the better I came to like them, the more I trembled for consequences. Fiery sherry flowed freely at Mess, unexceptionable liquor, which only wanted keeping. In Christmas week, that was fairly well; but it would still be their tipples through the scorching summer. Ale and stout were on tap in the canteens, and the privates could get cheaply drunk on the *aguardiente*, which came in duty free. The Mess kept a capital table. There was little to complain of in the Christmas



sirloins, for the cattle - boat brought regular supplies of beef from Tangiers, and there was game in profusion. Nowhere have I broken out so recklessly in woodcocks. We used to order a brace or a leash for breakfast, and make elegant extracts of the trails and thighs. That ought to have been a specially lively season, for Colonel Paulet Somerset, commanding the regiment, was master of the Gibraltar pack, and his cousin, the Duke of Beaufort, had come out with some couples of hounds from the Badminton kennels. We had sundry fair days in the corkwood, and it was delightful, after riding a hired hack, to be mounted on a fiery barb. Though we found, I cannot say we often killed, but nevertheless the sport was novel, picturesque, and exciting. The Duke had brought young Dick Christian—son of the “Druid’s” old friend—with him as huntsman. One day I saw Dick, who was whipping up the stragglers, charged by a magnificent young bull who had been outraged by the flash of his scarlet. It was a near thing; Dick, with his horse balking at a torrent-bed had spurred, as he afterwards said, like the devil, and certainly I never saw a man work his persuaders so vigorously. It ought, as I said, to have been a

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Colonel James Semmes, commanding it—
and, two miles of the Gibraltar pack, a
couple, the Duke of Beaufort, had come out
from the bounds from the Heds
house. We had sundry fair days in the
month and in the delightful, after riding a
back, he descended on a fiery barb. Then
down I would say we often killed, but ne-
ver the spot was novel, picturesque, and in
the track had brought young Dick Chris-
tie of the "Trent's" old friend—with a
cousin. One day I saw Dick, who
was up the stragglers, charged by a
small young bull who had been out-
ing him of his secret. It was a near
call, perhaps, balking at a torrent-h





especially lively season, but it was clouded by unexpected gloom. First came the news of the secession of the first of the South American States—though that was received with philosophy, as possibly tending to international trouble. But then followed the sad intelligence of the death of the Prince Consort, and with the firing of the funeral salutes the garrison went into mourning.

We took the cattle paddle - wheeler to Tangiers, and had a rough and tedious passage. Transferred from the small shore-boat to the shoulders of stalwart Moors who waded through the shallowing water, we walked through festering and odoriferous piles of filth. I have never since then been at Tangiers, but it must have been greatly transformed. Now there are fashionable hotels, frequented by winter sojourners. Then there were two little inns—one kept by an Englishman, the other by a couple of kindly French spinsters. We put up at the latter, and were lapped in semi-Oriental luxury. The French ladies were accomplished *cordons bleu*; we smoked post-prandial cigars on the flat roof, sipping such Eastern coffee as I have seldom tasted except at Constantinople. The rides in the environs were

romantic, and we might have been tempted to linger longer, but unfortunately our Consul, Drummond Hay, was absent, who could have shown us something of sport in Morocco.

Another trip *manqué* from Gibraltar was characteristic of the casualties that may befall one in Spanish rides. We left Gibraltar, for the excursion through the Sierra to Ronda, in splendid weather. We had only got as far as Gaucin, when the rains descended, the floods came, and we were clearly in for a protracted storm. There was a report that the rivers were rising and the ravines in spate. My companion was a soldier, tied for time, and there was nothing for it but to turn. All went tolerably well till we got to a river, some dozen of miles short of San Roque. We had passed it nearly dry-shod a day or two before; now it was a swirling torrent, running bank-high. We drew up at the *ventorilla*, kept by the ferrymen, who worked the rickety broad-bottomed craft with a patched rope. They pronounced the passage impracticable, and the stream was still rising. They only provided shelter; they gave neither beds nor food. Mule-trains were already in possession of the stabling, and others kept dropping in. For the most part

xvi.] RAIN-BOUND IN THE SIERRAS 408

the men were good-humoured and jovial—a gathering of Sancho Panzas—and all we could do was to make the best of things. There were skinfuls of rough country wine, but even black bread was scarce, and the supplies soon gave out. Our own commissariat was exhausted the first evening—at least we had to fall back on a cake or two of chocolate. We went out to forage, but only came back with a few eggs, and one skinny chicken. Three nights and two mortal days we passed in that insectivorous inferno, praying and waiting for the waters to go down. The fleas were as ravenous as we were, and the way they worried us was a caution. At last there was a cry, one blessed morning, that the river was sinking fast. There must have been a block somewhere up-stream, for the fall was only temporary. With the frank courtesy of the Spanish lower classes, the friendly muleteers gave us the lead; we hustled the sluggish ferrymen with our horses into the boat, and our troubles were left behind us. Never shall I forget the meal I made that forenoon in the verandah of the inn at San Roque, on pork chops and porter, with the British fortress at our feet, and the summits of the Atlas in front of us.

The rains had ceased, the skies had cleared, and the sun was shining in all his splendour.

The Rock is scorching in the blaze of the southern sun, but Malaga is blessed with eternal spring, only interrupted by the tropical summer. There the sugar-cane flourishes luxuriantly, and the vines are said to be fuller of saccharine than any in Europe. The Alameda and Victoria hotels were overflowing with invalids, all rather gone in the throat or chest. Small blame to them if none were to be persuaded to join in a January visit to Granada. Setting out on a solitary journey, one had an experience of the sharp vicissitudes of climate in mountainous Spain. On the coast-road to Velez Malaga, the lightest dress felt oppressive. When we changed mules after midnight in historic Alhama, with what wraps I had I was literally congealed. I was colder when I got out at the Parador of the Diligences in Granada than when I came down on Cordova from the Sierra Morena. I put up at the Amistad, where they were friendly enough, and you could not complain of extravagant charges. Five shillings a day covered everything, with one important exception: firing in your private room was not included; each basketful

of wood-chips cost a peseta, and the servant was perpetually on the trot on the stairs, till I threw up the sponge in despair and stopped the idle extravagance. When the wind whistled in through cracks in the door the combustibles vanished in smoke up the chimney. Thenceforward, when not taking active exercise, I oscillated between the warmed churches and the opera. For seven mortal evenings I sat through *Don Giovanni*, rendered execrably by a third-rate travelling company. It is true I was more than consoled for endurance by the sombre glories of the Red Palace fortress, and the splendours of the superb wintry landscape. One might expatiate at any length on the snow-covered summits of the Sierra—inexhaustible reservoirs which clothe the Vega in emerald green when all lower Andalusia is burning; on the charms of the Generalife, even in mid-winter dress, with its perennial fountains and its murmuring brooks; on the meeting of the waters of the Xenil and the Darro beneath the rugged ravines honeycombed with the caves of the gypsies.

The dripping gardens of the Alhambra and the hazy Vega rather tantalized one, because fancy was always figuring how gloriously they would

have shown in May or June. In early February the gardens and orchards of the Huerta of Valencia were already rich in their green luxuriance. There I waited a week for a Barcelona steamer, and if I wearied of *Don Giovanni* at Granada, I was equally bored with *Robert le Diable* at Valencia. Of course every Englishman in Spain is bound to go to the bull-rings. Repulsive as in many respects they are, they have, nevertheless, the morbid attraction which would tempt one to a combat of gladiators, were the old Roman games revived. I had seen them in summer, at San Sebastian, when the bulls were at their best; and I had seen them in Madrid and Seville in mid-winter, when the "sport" is but second-rate. Horrible as it is to look at horses disembowelled, and a sullen or timid bull forced up to the scratch by exploding barbed crackers in his shoulders, or slipping savage bull-dogs on his haunches, there is breathless interest when the *matadors* fairly stake their lives on their coolness, agility, and sleight of swordsmanship. The sturdy Cuchares and the graceful El Tato were miracles of calm courage and finished dexterity. Bull-fighting I was bound to see, but I had always drawn the line at

cock-fighting. But in Spain the cock-pit, though more select, is scarcely less popular than the bull-ring, and it gives better opportunities for staking the *duros*. At Valencia the owner of a noted breed, whose acquaintance I had made at the *table d'hôte*, persuaded me to see the performances of his favourites. The faces, bent eagerly tier above tier round the pit, would have made an admirable subject for the painter of the *Meniñas* and the *Hilanderas*. As for the cocks, as they crowed their challenges they entered so thoroughly into the spirit of the game, that they had eyes for nothing but their ruffling antagonists. Cock-fighting is a cruel sport, but I can only record my impressions. There was little flying of feathers, and less flowing of blood. The victim seemed to collapse to one sudden, deadly stroke, and the conqueror stood over him, so pleased with his triumph that he scarcely paid attention to the wounds that caused more concern to his master.

Leaving Valencia for Barcelona, you left old Spain: you took leave of Valencian black eyes, black fans, black mantillas, and the prettiest girls in the Peninsula; of Greek leggings, hemp sandals, and loose white linen drawers—legacies

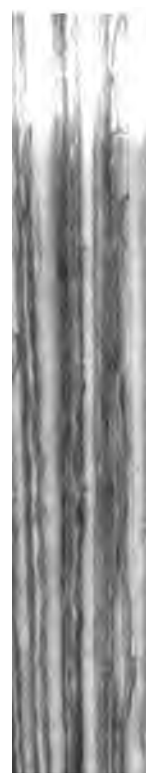


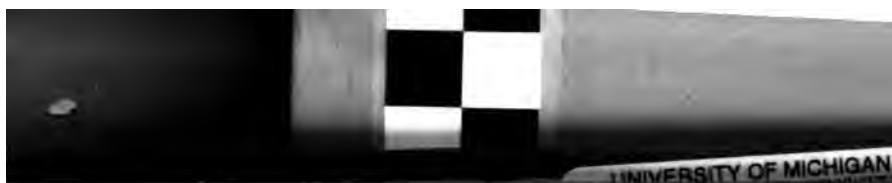
Gibraltar looking West.

To face p. 400

xvi.] COSMOPOLITAN BARCELONA 409

the antiquated olive-green tartana, something between a gondola mounted on wheels and a bathing-machine, was the universal conveyance. Here the Rambla was crowded with gay equipages, and for the graceful mantilla and the brief stage petticoat you had the fashions of last year from the Rue de la Paix. You were out of old Spain, yet you had another and a last glimpse of it when you took your place in the *diligence* for Perpignan; for the brigands from the mountains were as busy as the cosmopolitan bagmen, and you were warned to send valuables by sea, and to put no more money in your purse than might ransom your ears or your throat. Patrols of cavalry crossed the *diligence* everywhere, but Catalonia is a difficult country to police.





INDEX

A

- ABOUT, E.**, "Trente et Quarante," 26, 99; "Question Romaine," 269; on the poverty of the Neapolitans, 305
Ache, the, 122
Agassiz, 168
Agriculture of Sicily, 321
Ahr Valley, 72; fishing, 72; wines, 73
Ahrbleichart, 72
Aix la Chapelle, 61
Albana, St, Duke of, 291
Albany, Duke of, 230
Albin Hills, 271
Albula, the, 167
Alcazar junction, 392
Algeciras, 397
Algeria, 45
Alhambra, gardens of the, 405
Alhana, 404
Almers, the, of Grindelwald, 173
Aloe, the, 218
Alpine Club, 168; climbers, 169; exploits, 170
Alpine Journals, 169
Alsace, annexation of, 86
Alte Schloss, 98
American States, South, views of the secession of the first, 401
Amsterdam, 7; inns, 7; fare, 7; costumes, 9; Jews' quarter, 11; foundations, 252
Andalusia, 47, 387, 405; hams of, 382
Andermatt, 168; bridge of, 61
Andernach, 70
Anderson, Sir Percy, 73
Andrea, Cardinal d', 277
Andregga, the, of Zermatt, 173
Angelo, St, of the Three Peaks, 311
Antibes, 225
Antonelli, Secretary of State in Rome, 269, 276
Antwerp, 5, 17; hotels, 19
Aosta, 161, 164
Apennines, the, 208
Apollinaris water, 73
Arden, Frederick, 379
Ardennes, inns, 19; attractions, 35; character of the scenery, 35; fishing, 36; wild shooting, 37
Arragon, 380
Artagnan, D', 227
Arth, 148
Aspern, commemoration of, 185
Assisi, frescoes of, 216
Astroni crater, 317
Asturias, the, 385
Atlas, the, 403
Auerbach, his "Schwartz wälder Dorfgeschichte," 128
Augsburg, 199, 203
Auray, 336; oysters of, 351
Austria, scarcity of silver in, 51
Austria, Emperor Francis Joseph of, 119, 120
Avranches, 335

B

- BACHARACH, ruins of, 81
 Baden, attractions, 35, 98; gaming tables at, 98; patrons, 98; waters, 100; in war-time, 101
 Baden, Grand Duke of, 91
 Badger-hounds, 180
 Baie des Trépassés, 353
 Balbi, the, 254
 Ball, Mr, his "Alpine Guide," 172
 Balmats, the, of Mont Blanc, 173
 Balzac, 346; cost of his books, 133; "Incarnation de Vautrin," 352
 Bamberg, 198, 200; market-place, 198
 Barbarossa, the gift of, 61
 "Barbary towers," 218
 Barcelona, 184, 408
 Bart, Jean, 353
 Basle, 100; the *diligence* service, 139; hotels, 142
 Basque Provinces, 380, 394
 Baths at Gastein, 122; Homburg, 88, 98; Ischl, 120; Kissingen, 111; Ragatz, 115; Schlangenbad, 111; Schwalbach, 104-106; Wiesbaden, 88, 97; Wildbad, 112; Wilhelmsbad, 91
 Bavaria, 119
 Bavaria, Louis of, 60
 Baveno, 233, 235
 Bazaine, 227
 Bearn, 133
 Beatenberg, 116
 Beaufort, Duke of, 400
 Beaute, his skill in smuggling, 151
 Beer, of Belgium, 33; of Vienna, 191
 Beggars of Brittany, 345; Naples, 303
 Belgium, 17; character of the people, 17; food, 19; wine, 22; beer, 33; coach-horses, 33; books, 124
 Bellagio, Lake, 233
 Bellanger, Marguerite, 3
 Benazet, M., 75; his establishment, 89; tre suicides, 93; fortune, 1
 Benner, the guide, fate of
 Béranger, his couplet, 96
 Bergues, Quai des, 92
 Berlin, 175; the rise
 Under den Linden, 18:
 phal entry of Kaiser
 182; the Branden
 183; theatres, 183; p
 183; ascendancy of t
 184
 Bernard, St, hospice, 161
 living, 161; hospitali
 monks, 162; the *clau*
 bursar, 162; cellar
 sagacity of the dogs, 16
 Berne, 144; first train
 139; hosteleries, 143
 Bethmann-Holweg, Prof.,
 Bethmans, the, 175, 176
 Beyfuses, the, 175
 Bidassoa, 31, 382
 Biebrich, glass-houses at,
 Bienne, 142
 Bingen, 69
 Bingerloch, 56
 Birds of Italy, 286
 Biscay, 385
 Bismarck, Prince, his esc
 drowning, 83; on the ar
 of Alsace and Lorraine
 Black Forest, 35
 Blanc, Mont, ascent of,
 of the, 158
 — M., 89, 98, 221;
 pulsion from Germa
 palace at Monte Carl
 Blonay, Baron de, 153
 Blücher, 201
 Bohemia, 119; pheasants
 Bohrens, the, of Grindel
 Boisfort, 20

ey, his "Crime de l'Opera,"
 , leaning towers of, 390
 King, of Naples, 299; the
 s of, 215
 nel, 44
 89; changes in, 58; uni-
 ty, 66; *pensions*, 66
 ies, 4
 d, ruins of, 81
 iera, 127
 , George, 39; on the
 cter of the Margatas, 393
 rus, 332
 l, advice from Johnson, 51
 ger, General, 364, 373
 , 168
 t, Southern, 17
 mne, Raoul de, 227
 n burghers, their character,
 t, 367
 i, 58
 r, the lower, 167
 periwinkles of, 351; "the
 ys," 352
 St., 347; the Kloarec, or
 student, at, 347
 ls, 310, 322; precautions
 st, 214, 311
 y, 335; settlements of
 ish, 335; food, 336; cost of
 g, 337; cider, 337; public
 eyances, 337; woods, 338;
houannerie, 338; roads, 339;
 ig, 339; the *patois*, 340;
 cter of the people, 340, 344,
 dirty habits, 340; hairs,
 work of the tailor, 342;
 me, 342; *fêtes* and *pardons*,
 religion, 344, 346; beggars,
 names of saints, 345;
 icy of the Church, 346; the
 rec, or poor student, 347;
 s of paganism, 349; boat-
 350; shell-fish, 351, "the

galleys," 352; character of the
 fishermen, 353; inns, 354
 Brohan, Mdle., 376
 Brother Castles, 82
 Broues, President de, his travels,
 255
 Brougham, Lord, his Villa
 Eleonore, 226
 Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, 240
 Bruges, 18; fish dinners at the
 Hotel de Flandres, 19; neglect,
 23; asylum for the impecunious,
 24; interests, 24; chimées, 24;
 Memline's masterpiece, 25
 Brussels, 24; hotels, 20, 27; food,
 20; charges, 20; compared with
 Paris, 26; the Bois de la Cambre,
 26; Montagne de la Cour, 27;
 "longshore" population, 28;
 changes in, 28; the field of
 Waterloo, 29-32
 Bucharest, 189, 223
 Buendelmonti, the, 243
 Bugs in Sicily, 329
 Bull-fighting in Spain, 406
 Bulwer, 56; "Pilgrims of the
 Rhine," 62
 Burgos Cathedral, 388
 Burgundy, 133; wines, 22
 Butero, Prince, his palace, 234
 Byron, Lord, on the forest of
 Soignies, 32; his stanzas on the
 Drachenfels, 67; at Ouchy, 152;
 Vevey, 154; Pisa, 246; Venice,
 256; the Lido, 257; on the
 Spanish muleteers, 394

C

CADIZ, 385; ride from, 396
 Cairo, 396
 Calabria, 310, 324
 Calatafimi, 328, 332
 Camorra Society, in Naples, 307
 Campagna, view of the, 264, 271

- Canal boats, Flemish, *cuisine* of, 13
 Canal, North Sea, trial trip through the, 12; cost of, 12
 Canaletti, his paintings, 252, 255
 Canino, Lucien, Prince of, 94
 Cannes, 225; the "Californie," 226; views, 227; walks, 227; driving, 228
 Canova, 242
 Capri, 296, 297, 314, 317; wine, 213, 214, 317
 Capua, Count of, 299
 Carleton, his "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," 345
 Carlyle, Dr, on the Dutch villas, 14
 Carnac, 349
Carnival, in Rome, 289-293
 Carving, wood, style of, in Vienna, 192
 Casanova, memoirs of, 255
 Caserta, 299
 Castel Giovanni, 328
 Castellamare, 303, 315, 332; prison, 308
 Castellani, 277
 Catalonia, 47
 Catania, 321, 333; ride from, 334
 Cathedrals of Spain, 388-390
 Cellini Benvenuto, 242
 Cenis, the, 165; number of refugees, 165; railway, 168
 Cerjat, M. de, 152
 Cervantes, 47
 Chamouny, route to, 156; hotels, 157; guides, 158
 Charity, Sisters of, their appeals to gamblers, 97
 Charlemagne, 161, 174
 Charlottenburg, 182
 Chateaubriants, 339
 Cheeses, number of, 7
 Chiavenna, 167
 Chiclana, 382
 Cholera, epidemic of, in Naples, 304; in Venice, 249
 Chouannerie, the, of Brittany, 338
 Christian, Dick, 400
 Cider, the Breton, 337
 Cigars, smuggling, 131; of Madrid, 132, 383
 Cimiez, 224
 Cisterna, 209, 211, 288, 310
 Civita Castellana, 260
 — Vecchia, 210; arrival at, 261, 262; customs, 262; inns, 263
 Clavandier, or bursar, of St Bernard, 162; on the sagacity of the dogs, 163
 Clitannus, meadows of, 216
 Clos Vougeot, 22
 Closter Nomenwerth, 66
 Coach-horses of Belgium, 33
 Coblenz, 73, 76; cost of living, 77; exiles, 77; banker at, 50
 Cock-fighting in Spain, 407
 Coinage, confusion of, 49-52; of France, 51; Germany, 49; Italy, 50; Spain, 50, 383; Switzerland, 51
 Coliseum, restoration of, 273-275
 Colleredo, Countess, 277
 Cologne, 54, 174; changes in, 58; churches, 60; cathedral, 60; legends, 61; shrine of the Three Kings, 61; completion, 62; railways, 63; hotels, 64; population, 66
 Colquhoun, Chevalier, 229
 Como, Lake, 232
 Condamine, 222
 Consort, Prince, his death, 401
 Copenhagen, 123
 Cordova, 393
 Corentin, St, 346
 Cornice road, 217
 Corriere of Sicily, 327
 Cosenza, 304, 311
 Costumes, mediæval, of Brittany, 342; of Holland, 9



INDEX

415

Cotton, Sergeant, 29
Coutts, Messrs, 39
Cozzo, Pietro, his palace at Padua, 247
Cry, Haut de, ascent of, 173
Currency question, 49
Customs, 43; attempts to defraud, 44, 45, 383; at Civita Vecchia, 262; Spain, 383

D

DACHSHUNDS, 180
Danube, the, 123, 186
Darmstadt, 84
Darro, the, 405
Dasent, Sir George, "Jest and Earnest," 112
Daudet, Alphonse, 133; his "Nabab," 358
Davos, 116
Davy, Sir Humphrey, 121
Dennistoun, Mr, 219
Dent du Midi, 154
Devil's Bridge, 168
Diligence, travelling by, in Spain, 386; in Switzerland, 140
Dinan, 335
Disgrazia, Monte della, ascent of, 170
Doche, Madame, 375
Dogs of St Bernard, sagacity, 163; prices, 164
Douarnes, shell-fish of, 351
Dover, Lord Warden, library, 130
Doyle, "Brown, Jones and Robinson," 175
Drachenfels, the, 67, 68
Dreher, his brewery, 191
Dresden, 195; attractions, 196; picture gallery, 196; *Schutz-kammer*, 196; opera-house, 196; Whitsun-week holiday, 197
Duchâtel, Tanneguy, 346
Dumas, Alexander, 263, 274, 334,

352; "Impressions de Voyage," 61, 134, 173; on the conversions of St Goar, 82; his story of Prince Metternich, 83; cost of his books, 133; his romances, 133; character of his writings, 134; his story of Beaute, 151; on the birth-place of Goethe, 177; his sketch of Pastrini, 285; on the lazzaroni of Naples, 301; on the poverty of the Neapolitans, 305
Dumas, his *La Dame aux Camelias*, 375
Dürer, Albert, 198, 202
Düsseldorf, 58
Dutch inns, 7; frugality, 11; industry, 13; qualities, 17
Duval, his cheap restaurants, 368

E

EAGLE'S NEST, 172
Earthquakes, shocks of, 156, 157
Eastbourne, Grand Hotel, library in the, 130
Ebel, 144
Eber, General, on tipping in Vienna, 190
Ebro, eels from the, 381
Ehrenbreitstein, 74
Elbe, the, 196
Eltville, 85
Ems, 74, 76
Engadine, 116, 167
Engelberg, 116
Engelhardt, his discovery of Zermatt, 159
Enkhuizen, 19
Enz, trout fishing, 113
Eothen, 275, 395
Esterel, range of the, 227
Estramadura, hams of, 381
Etna, 321, 333
Europe, tour of, preparations for a, 39

F

FACCHINI of Naples, 301-303
Faisans, Isle des, 382
Fazy, Mr James, his gaming establishment, 92
Ferdinand, King, of Naples, 299
Fère, Count de la, 227
Ferret, Val de, 162
Ferrol, 262
Feydean, 133
Fiesole, 242
Finsteraarhorn, 170
Fish dinners at the Hotel de Flandres, Bruges, 19
Fishing in the Ahr Valley, 72; the Ardennes, 36; Brittany, 339; Spain, 380; the Traun, 121
Fitzgerald, Sir Seymour, on the exclusiveness of the Austrian nobility, 188
Flanders, plains of, 17
Flaubert, Gustave, 133
Flemish canal boats, *cuisine* of, 13
Florence, 42, 238; route to, 215; under the rule of the Grand Dukes, 239; its charms, 240; palaces, 240; Piazza della Signoria, 241; Loggia dei Lanzi, 242; Fiesole, 242; cost of living, 243; theatres, 244; the capital, 244; Misericordia, 245; names of the streets, 245
Fluellen, 168
Flushing, 5
Folgoat, Fool's Chapel of, 347
Foligno, 216
Folkstone, customs at, 48; old Pavilion at, library, 130
Fondi, 310
Ford, his "Handbook of Spain," 351, 378; on the *cuisine*, 381
Formian wine, 213
Foscari, the, 254
France, decimal coinage of, 51

Francis I., 161
Franco-German War, 101
Frankfort-on-Maine, 91, 174; quality of the cigars, 132; importance, 175; the Bourse, 175; clubs, 176; hotels, 177; cost of living, 178; garrison, 178; extent of territory, 179; sporting excursions, 180; population, 180; attractions, 180
Freiburg, 129
Fréjus, 226
Friedland, Duke of, 204
Friesland, 13; costumes of, 9
Fuenterabia, 382
Fugger, 199

G

GABAS, 379
Gaboriau, style of his romances, 135
Gaetani, the, 209
Galignani, character of, 369
*Galley*s, the, at Brest, 352
Gambling tables in Germany, 88; gains, 89; attractions, 90; sleeping partners, 91; administration, 92; suicides, 93; passion for, 94; luck, 95; breaking the Bank, 96; Sisters of Charity, 97; at Monte Carlo, 223; Spa, 34; Switzerland, 92
Garcia, his luck in gambling, 96
Garibaldi, 225; in Sicily, 323, 324
Gascony, 133
Gastein baths, 122
Gaucin, 402
Gautier, Théophile, 133
Gavr Innis, island of, 350
Gemmellars, Dr Joseph, 334
Gemmi, the, 156
Geneva, 144, 156; quality of cigars at, 132; hotels, 150; watches, 151; view of, 218

INDEX

417

- Gérard, Jules, 44
 Germany, character of the
 bankers, 49; scarcity of gold,
 50; the heavy coinage, 52;
 baths, 88; gambling tables, 88;
 books in, 124, 127; novels of,
 128
 — Emperor William of, his
 triumphal entry into Berlin,
 182
 Gibraltar, ride to, 396; arrival
 at, 398; the garrison mess, 399;
 sport, 400
 Gibson, his studio in Rome, 280;
 pupils, 281, 282
 Gingolph, St, 154
 Girardin, Madame Emile de, her
 comedies, 375
 Girgenti, giant temples of, 332
 Gmunden, 121
 Goar, St, 69
 Goarhausen, 82
 Goethe, birth-place of, 177
 Gold, scarcity of, in Germany,
 50
 Goldoni, memoirs of, 255
 Gonda, 167
 Goodwin, Mr, consul at Palermo,
 323
 Gorbio, 221
 Gossett, Mr, his ascent of the
 Haut de Cry, 173
 Gothard, St, 167
 Graham, in Spain, 386, 396
 Grammont, Duc de, 278
 Granada, 118, 404; visit to, 404;
 the opera, 405
 Grebert, Herr, his hotel the Allée
 Saal, 106
 Grimaldi, the, 221, 254
 Grindelwald, 171, 172
 Grisons, the, 167
 Guadalquivir, valley of the, 393
 Gueldres marshes, 13
 Guides of Switzerland, 158;
 rules, 158, 173; cost, 158;
 patois, 172; character, 172;
 reputation, 173
 Gustavus Adolphus, 204
- H
- HAARLEM, inns, 7; improve-
 ments, 15
 Hague, the, 6
 Haldimand, M., 153
 Hals, Franz, 10
 Halsberg, Rudolph of, 55
 Hapsburgs, the, 174
 Hardy, the King of the Riffl,
 160
 Hare, Augustus, on Venice, 256
 Harlingen, 9
 Harwich, 5, 12
 Hauser, Herr, 130
 Hausmann, Baron, 376
 Hawkshaw, Sir John, 11
 Hay, Drummond, 402
 Hayward, his "Art of Dining," 365
 Head, Sir Francis, his book on
 the Brünnen of Nassau, 103,
 108; on the colour of the
 waters at Schwalbach, 110
 Heine, his "Reisebilder," 128
 Heisterbach, ruins of, 68
 Helst, Van der, 8, 10
 Herbesthal, 41
Herzog von Nassau, 69
 Hesse-Cassel, Elector of, 91, 94
 — Darmstadt, forest of, 179
 — — Duke of, 85
 — Homburg, Prince of, 91
Hidalgo, or man of business, 387
 Hobhouse, his notes on *Childe*
 Harold, 217
 Hohenzollerns, the, 174
 Holland, first impressions of, 1,
 3; inns, 5, 7; food, 6; wine, 6;
 curios, 8; costumes, 9; picture
 galleries, 10; railways, 13;
 villas, 14; monotony of the
 scenery, 17

Homburg, 88, 223; waters, 97, 98
 Hood, Tom, 80; "Up the Rhine," 4, 55
 Hook, the, 5
 Hoorn, 8, 19; cabinet at, 8
 Horses, treatment of, in Italy, 316
 Hosmer, Miss, 282
 Hotel libraries, 129
 Hougomont, 30
 Hubert, St., 22, 36
 Hudson, Mr., 370
 Hugo, Victor, on the trade of Cologne, 59; on the cathedral, 60; at Welmich, 81; size of his works, 133
 Hunt, Leigh, at Pisa, 246
 Hyères, 221

I

INGHAM, Mr., 214
 Inns, Dutch, 7; Spanish, 380
 Interlaken, 144; attractions, 145
 Irun, 382
 Ischia, 314, 317
 Ischl, 102, 119; baths, 120; the deer, 120; trout fishing, 121
 Isola Bella, 234; gardens, 234
 Italy, coinage, 52; first sight of, 167; mode of travelling by vettura, 206; milk-white steers, 216; beggars, 303; prisons, 308; brigands, 310; treatment of horses, 316
 Itri, 310
Ivanhoe, 2

J

JANIN, Jules, request for his autograph, 83
 Jassy, 189, 223
 Jews quarter at Amsterdam, 11; their mode of gambling, 94;

ascendency in Berlin, 184; graveyard at Lido, 258
 John, St., Charles, "Natural History in Moray," 287
 Johnson, his advice to Boswell, 51
 Julier, the, 167
 Jullien, conductor, 375
 Jüngfrau, 146

K

KAHLENBERG, 184
 Kandersteg, earthquake at, 156
 Kennedy, on the beneficial effects of Alpine climbing, 170; his ascent of the Monte della Disgrazia, 170
 Kinglake, on the East, 246
 Kirmess, a Rhenish, 70
 Kissingen, 111
 Klapka, General, 77
 Klitch, his pipes, 193
 Kloarec, or poor student of Brittany, 347
 Kloster, Bernhofen, 82
 Klosterli, landlord of, 143
 Koch, Herr, 176
 Koennemann's *Kapelle*, 101
 Königswinter, 68

L

LAACHER SEE, 70
 Lacryma wine, 213, 214, 317
 Lahnstein, 57
 Lannion, 337; inn at, 354
 Lanzi, Loggia dei, 242
 Lausanne, 151, 153
 Lauterbrunnen, 145
 Lazzaroni of Naples, 301
 Lebauf, Françoise, 377
 Lee, 39
 Leghorn, 225
 Leighton, Lord, 216
 Leipsic, 127



- Metternich, Prince, his passion for autographs, 83
 Metz, 84; blockade of, 102
 Meyers, the, 168
 Michael, Grand Duke, 107
Migueletes, or mountain militia-man of Spain, 386
 Milan, 235; under the rule of the Austrians, 236
 Milton, 382
 Misenum, Promontory of, 297
 Misericordia, the, of Florence, 245
 Mocrenigo, the, 254
 Mola di Gaeta, 212
 Moltke, General von, 86, 183
 Monaco, 221
 Mongibello, 331
 Monjuich, 408
 Montboron, 224
 Monte, Capo di, 299
 — Carlo, 92, 221; M. Blanc's palace at, 222
 Montforts, 339
 Montreux, 151
 Morbihan, Sea of, 350; oysters, 351
 Moritz, St, 119
 Morlaix, 353
 Morny, De, sale of his stud, 357
 Moro Pass, Monte, 171
 Morocco, 398, 402
 Morreale, 320
 Moselle, the, 74
Mozo, the, 387
 Muleteers of Spain, 393-395
 Munich, 195
 Muñoz, Madame, 291
 Münsterthal, 140, 142
 Munthe, Axel, "Letters from a Mourning City," 304; on the Camorra Society, 307
 Murgthal, 100, 115
 Murray, John, character of his guide-books, 136; on the Kulm Haus, 148
 Mürren, 146
 Music, style of, in Vienna, 191
 Musset, De, on the Café de Paris, 363

N

- NAPLES, 296; *octroi* at, 46; drive to, 209; wines, 213, 317; system of alms-giving, 268; in the spring, 297; Albergo dei Poveri, 297; sea-front, 297; the rule of King Ferdinand and King Bomba, 299; passport system, 299; the lazzaroni, 301; *facchini*, 301-303; beggars, 303; epidemic of cholera, 304; number of paupers, 304; sanitation, 304; theatres, 305, 306; poverty of the nobility, 305; discontent, 306; tyranny of the Government, 306; the Camorra, 307; mode of burial, 308-310; brigands, 310
 Naples, Bay of, 332
 Napoleon, Emperor, 161; at St Bernard, 162, 165; Marchfeldt, 184; Schönbrun, 185
 — Emperor Louis, 356; his balls at the Tuileries, 358; unpretentious manners, 359; shooting parties, 359; attempt on his life, 362
 Narni, 216; ruined bridge of, 216
 Nassau, 103; florins of, 51
 — Duke of, 75, 82, 91; his State prison, 75; collection of plants, 181
 — Prince Nicholas of, at Schwalbach, 107
 Navarre, 380
 Nettuno, 210
 Neuwied, 56, 70
 Nice, 219, 224; military parade at, 225
 Nicolo, S., dell' Arena, Convenoft, 334

INDEX

421

Nicolosi, ride to, 334
 Nieder Mendig, quarries at, 70
 Nivelle, battle of the, 31
 North Sea Canal, trial trip through
 the, 12; cost of, 12
 Novels, cheap French, 133
 Nuremberg, 200; sketch of the
 history, 137; churches, 200;
 rule of the merchants, 200;
 walls, 202; artists, 202; number
 of inhabitants, 203; revival,
 203

O

OBERLAND, scenery of the, 145
 Oberwesel, ruins of, 81
Octroi, trouble with the, in Italy,
 46; in Spain, 47
 Odenwald, 180
 Odescalchi, fortress of the, 264
 Offenbach, his compositions, 375
 Offenburg, 102
 Oliphant, Laurence, 225
 Olive trees, 221
 Oneglia, 219
 Oos, 100
 Oporto, 408
 Orange, Prince of, story of, 278;
 at the Café Anglais, 364
 Orcagna, his frescoes at Pisa, 246
 Orfano Canal, 257
 Orsini, his attempt on the life of
 Emperor Louis Napoleon, 362
 Ostade, pictures of, 9, 10
 Ostend, 5, 24
 Ouchy, 151; the Anchor Inn, 152;
 opening of the Beau Rivage,
 152; society, 152
 Oysters at Auray, 351

P

PADUA, 247; the Café Pedrocchi,
 247
 Pæstum, 214, 310; brigands at,
 214

Pain de Sucre, 154
 Palermo, 213; Conca d'Oro of,
 234, 312, 320, 323; climate,
 319; hotels, 319; its charms,
 320; the Marina, 320
 Palm, the, 218
 Palo, 264
 Paris, 356; compared with
 Brussels, 26; *octroi* at, 47; novels
 in, 132; under Louis Napoleon,
 357; State functions, 358;
 decorations and suppers, 359;
 evenings on the Boulevards,
 360; the Café du Grand
 Balcon, 362; restaurants, 363-
 368; wines, 367; hotels, 368-
 375; *Galignani*, 369; Louvre
 Hôtel, 370-372; the Palais
 Royal, 373; theatres, 375;
 indifference to the *convenances*,
 377
 Pascall, M., 365
 Passports, 39; an old, 40; loss
 of, 41; system of, 299
 Pastrini, 285
 Pau, 379
 Paupers, number of, in Naples,
 304; mode of burial, 309
 "Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers," 169
 Pegnitz, 202
 Pelegrino, Monte, 320
 Perpignan, 409
 Perugia, 216; paintings of, 216
 Peter's, St, 260; illumination, 293.
See Rome
 Pfalz, 82
 Phlegraean Fields, 333
 Picture galleries of Holland, 10
 Piedmont, 239, 244; wines of,
 330
 Pierre, St, 161
 Pigs of Schwalbach, 108; of
 Spain, 381
 Pipes, carving on, 193
 Pisa, 245; the leaning tower,
 246; Campo Santo, 246

Pompeii, 311
 Ponente, Riviera di, 217
 Penies at Spa, 33
 Pontine marshes, 210, 212
 Pontresina, 117
 Ponza Isles, 212
 Post-chaise, a Roman, 263
 Potsdam, 182
 Proft, Madame, 20
 Puglino, Angelo, his career, 325
 Pyrenees, the, 379; a *venta* in, 379

Q

QUAIN, Sir Richard, 112
 Quatre Fils d'Aymon, 36
 Queensborough, 5
 Quimper, 335, 347
 Quimperlé, inn at, 355
 Quirinal, 273

R

RAGATZ, 115
 Ragusa, Signor, 312, 319; his patriotism, 320
 Raikes, Thomas, on the convicts of Brest, 352
 Railways of Cologne, 63; Holland, 13; Mont Cenis, 168; Switzerland, 139
 Rainford, Mr, 326
 Rastadt, 101
 Ratero, or footpad, 53
 Rauenthal vineyards, 85
 Rauenthaler wine, 84
 Ravenna, pine-forest at, 257
 Reading, pleasures of, 124
 Recco, 218
 Regensburg, 199, 201, 203
 Reggio, 311
 Rembrandt, at Amsterdam, 11
 Requesens, expedition under, 23
 Restaurants of Paris, 363-368
 Reuss, 168

Rheinfels, ruin of, 81
 Rheingau, 83
 Rhine, the, first glimpse of, 54; mediæval character, 55; rock of the Lorelei, 56, 80; steamers, 57; changes on the, 58; wines, 83
 Rhone Valley, 92, 156
 Riding in Sicily, 330
 Rigi, 144; ascent of the, 148; night on the, 149
 Ristori, her acting, 284
 Riviera, 42; drive along the, 217; vegetation, 218
 Roccafranca, 221
 Roe-deer of Schwalbach, 109; "calling" the, 109
 Rogers, S., 165; his "Italy," 161; at Terracina, 287
 Rohana, 339
 Rolandseck, 66
 Romanée wine, 22
 Rome, drive from, 209; route, 215; first view of St Peter's, 260, 265; arrival at, 265; character of older, 266; malaria, 266, 288; cardinals and monks, 267; system of alms-giving, 268; insanitation, 269; picturesqueness of decay, 270; the Forum, 271; basilica of St Paul, 271; view from St John Lateran, 271; character of the new, 272; restorations, 272; the Villa Ludovisi, 272; the Quirinal, 273; Coliseum, 273-275; society, 275; receptions, 277; balls, 278, 279; artists, 279; sculptors, 280-282; winter climate, 282; English club, 282; theatres, 284; hotels, 285; *cuisine*, 285-288; game, 286; birds, 286; sport, 288; Carnival, 289-293; illumination of St Peter's, 293; Holy Week, 293; religious

INDEX

423

Rome (*continued*)—
 ceremonials, 294; indulgences,
 294
 Ronda, 402
 Roon, General von, 86
 Rosa, Monte, ascent of, 172
 Rosbach, 73
 Roscoff, 353
 Rosskilly, Dr, 300
 Rosso, Monte, 333
 Rothenburg, 204; Castle of, 205
 Rothschild, Sir Anthony, 194
 — Baron, 175, 176, 194
 Rotterdam, 4; canals, 4; tourists,
 5; hotels, 6
 Roumania, 224
 Rous, Admiral, 20
 Rousseau, J. J.; his opinion of
 the Lake of Geneva, 150
Ruhrort, 69

S

SACHSENHAUSEN, suburb of, 180
 Saint-Cricq, Count de, 151
 Sala, on the Englishman abroad,
 88
 Salamanca, siege of, 385
 Salanches, 156
 Salerno, Highlands of, 314
 Salins, Baths of, 379
 Saltoun, Lord, 30
 Saltzkammergut, 185
 San Remo, 219, 220
 — Roque, 402, 403
 — Sebastian, 379, 384; the new,
 385; fish-market, 385; bull-
 fights at, 406
 Saragossa, siege of, 385
 Sarg, his hotel the Russie, 177
 Saussure, De, 168; his ascent of
 Mont Blanc, 159
 Savona, 219
 Savoy Alps, 154
 Saxon Switzerland, 196; scenes in
 the, 197

Scarracatoio, 311
 Scheldt, 17
 Scheveningen, 14
 Schlangenberg, snakes at, 111
 Schmidt, Baron, 119
 Schömberg schloss, 81
 Schönbrun, 185
 Schowen, 23
 Schwalbach, 76, 85; salubrity,
 103; baths, 104-106; hotels,
 106; dinners, 106-108; veal
 cutlets, 108; pigs, 108; roe-
 deer, 109; colour of the waters,
 110; snails, 110
 Schwarenbach, 157
 Scott, Sir Walter, 19; his books
 on a journey, 125
 Sedan, surrender of, 85
 Segesta, 332
 Segovia Cathedral, 389
 Seiler, his inn the Monte Rosa,
 160
 Servan, St, 335
 Seven Hills, 66, 69
 Seville Cathedral, 390; the
 Giralda, 390; bull-fights at,
 406
 Shelley, P. B., at Lerici, 219; Pisa,
 246
 Shell-fish of Brittany, 351
 Shooting, wild, in the Ardennes,
 36
 Shreckhorn, 171; ascent of, 172
 Siborne, 30
 Sicily, 118, 319; mode of travel-
 ling in, 319, 327, 330; difference
 between the towns and country,
 321; agriculture, 321; brigands,
 322; trade, 322; condition, 322-
 325; under the Bourbons, 324;
 release of convicts, 324; the
 Mafia, 325; conveyances, 327;
 food, 328; inns, 329; sleeping
 accommodation, 329; bugs,
 329; wines, 330; riding, 330;
 scenery, 331, 334; lack of

Sicily (*continued*)—

- accommodation near objects of architectural or historical interest, 332; Etna, 333; Convent of S. Nicolo dell' Arena, 334
- Sienna, 215
- Sierra, the, 53, 402, 405
— Morena, drive over the, 392
- Silver, scarcity of, in Austria, 51
- Simplon, 165, 167
- Sixt valley, 172
- Smith, Albert, 164; his ascent of Mont Blanc, 158
- Smuggling, 44; cases of, 44, 45; Tauchnitz volumes, 131; in Spain, 383, 393
- Snails of Schwalbach, 110
- Snakes at Schlungenbad, 111
- Sobieski, 184
- Soignies, forest of, 26, 32
- Somerset, Colonel Paulet, 400
- Soracte, peak of, 216
- Sorrento, winter at, 213, 214, 311; climate, 313; views, 314; commissariat difficulties, 314
— Cape of, 297
- Soult, his attempted relief of San Sebastian, 384
- Southey, R., 124; on the solitude of Bruges, 23
- Souvestre, on the Kloarec, or poor student of Brittany, 347, 348
- Spa, 92; hotels, 21, 34; ponies, 33; gaming tables, 34
- Spain, 378; the *octrois*, 47, 382; coinage, 52, 383; cigars, 131; the *ventas*, 380; fishing, 380; inns, 381; food, 381; pigs, 381; smuggling, 383, 393; letters of credit or circular notes, 384; result of the Peninsular and Civil Wars, 384; the *diligence*, 386; *cuisine*, 388; cathedrals, 388-390; muleteers, 393-395; riding, 395; the sun, 396; changes of climate, 404; bull-fights, 406; cock-fights, 407; wines, 408
- Spain, Queen, Christina of, in Rome, 291
- Spence, his studio in Rome, 281
- Spezzia, 219
- Spice Islands, 4
- Spichenen heights, 85
- Splügen, 167
- Spoleto, the Porto d'Annibale, 216
- Spree, the, 181
- Stalden, 160
- Stamboul, 332
- Staubach, 146
- Steamers on the Rhine, 57
- Steers, milk-white, of Italy, 216
- Stelvio, 167
- Stephen, Sir Leslie, 169; his "Play-ground of Europe," 171
- Sterna, the, 175
- Stolzenfels, 56, 79
- Stone-pine, the, 218
- Story, his "Roba di Roma," 285
- Strahlek pass, 171
- Strasburg, bombardment of, 102
- Strauss, Johann, 191; his dance music, 192
- Stromboli, 333
- Studez, 168
- Stuttgart, 195
- Sué, Eugène, 133; "Mysteries of Paris," 268
- Suez Canal, opening of the, 13
- Suggestum, 213
- Suicides, treatment of, 93
- Switzerland, decimal coinage, 51; gambling, 92; baths, 115; changes, 138; travelling by *diligence*, 139; guides, 158, 173
— Saxon, 196; scenes in the, 197
- Syracuse, 329, 333; wines, 330

T

- TAINÉ, on the trade of Venice, 256
- Tairraza, the, of Mont Blanc, 173

